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Why Japan Risks War

Two Reports:

New Markets: Tokyo's Lifeline

Famine in the Countryside

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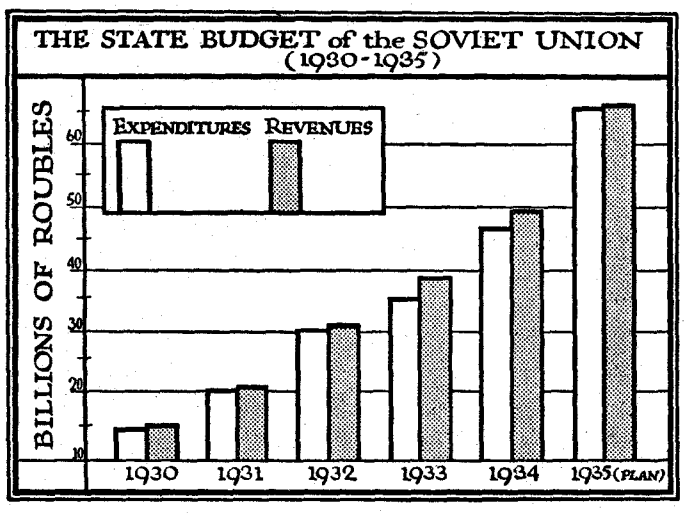
The SOVIET UNION

has tripled its budget —yet kept it balanced

The vast program of planned economy being carried out by the Soviet Union has called for constantly mounting expenditures. Annual investments in industrialization and costs of social and cultural measures have grown from 14.6 billion roubles in 1930 to 46.9 billion roubles in 1934, an increase of over 320%. Yet year after year the Soviet Union has paid its way with a surplus! *Its budget is balanced!*



The record at the left is unique among nations. The Soviet Union is the only country in the world which has so greatly increased its budget during these years without incurring a deficit. Moreover, circulation of currency in the past two years has decreased by one billion roubles in the face of a 46% increase in retail trade and a declining price level.

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New Masses

JUNE 25, 1935

THE FARM PROGRAM — *Boris Gorelick*

One Week's Strikes

THE most careful observer in Miss Frances Perkins' department cannot deny this following characteristic of the past week's strikes: not a single picket-line raised the slogan "Soviets!" The operators of Omaha cars did not insist on appropriating the street railways nor did the mechanics take over the power rooms. Indeed their demands were infinitely more modest. They asked for slight increases in pay so that more food would appear on the supper table. They asked for shorter work hours. Yet machine-guns rattled, poison gas choked, two men in Omaha were killed, more than a hundred wounded. To ask for bread is tantamount to treason. Police swept through the city in high-powered cars and emptied their service guns into men, women and children. As this is written 1,800 National Guardsmen patrol Omaha's streets and the city is under martial law.

"DISOBEDIENT strikers" are haled before courts martial to get justice. That is not all: the men at the helm are jittery. Eight miles from South Omaha, the 17th Infantry —federal—has polished its rifles, gathered together its machine-gun tripods, replenished its gas-bomb supply and is in all readiness to go in, boys, and give the hunkies hell. In the meanwhile Adjutant General H. J. Paul in command of the National Guard, carried on bravely. Tear gas was ineffective, he told newspapermen. The orthodox war gasses would be used to clear the streets. "I don't mind a fight," the doughty captain said, "but when yellow cowards line their women and children up in front of them. . . ." Yes, the support of the entire city's proletariat, not only the workingmen's families, has thrown an uncontrollable scare into the city fathers. Governor Cochran ordered trolley cars off the street for the time being. These expensive vehicles keep getting burned under scab operation.

THE strike began two months ago when the men walked out demanding higher wages, union recognition, shorter hours. Government mediators mediated frantically but somehow the workingmen of 1935 are not the same as those of the previous year. Promises are scarcely nutritious, they have learned. When the traction company insisted upon retaining scabs and when it refused to re-hire 36 militant strikers the men picketed. The drought of depression seems to have dried the Grass Root country into first-class fuel —the flames of strike scurried all over the prairie country. The 19th century thunderations of Frank O. Lowden (remember the Pullman millions) for "States' Rights" had hardly died down when the Middle West crackled with gunfire. A more fundamental fight than "states' rights" was on—the fight for proletarian rights, the right to eat and to live. Frank Lowden and his fellow grass-rooters forgot to say anything about eating.

BUT workingmen in Toledo did; they said a lot about it in Freeport, Ill.; South Bend, Ind., considered a general strike; while in Terre Haute (Gene Debs' home town) armed guards hidden away in the Columbian Enameling and Stamping Co., were scared within an inch of their lives by the strikers who ferreted them out of the cellar somewhere. Everywhere the cause for strike was the same—higher wages and shorter hours, the demand for union recognition. And everywhere the general results were the same—arbitration diminished as an effective technique of settling strikes whereas trench helmets and machine-guns are much more in evidence. And although the President was still able to pull a Guffey bill out of his high hat and prevent 450,000 bituminous miners from striking, his magic is most obviously fading away. America seems to be in for a period of "widespread discontent" as The New York Times editorial writers will put it. The most careful reader of last week's strike dispatches noted many headlines on "violence." He read of many machine-guns being "posted" before picket lines. But this same careful observer will be unable to quote one item in which a machine-gun was posted looking down upon the residence of one stockholder, of even one little boss. Machine-guns are riddling holes in the myth of the "impartial" state—and without successful myths capitalism cannot rule.

"Recognizing" Liberia

LIBERIA, small west coast African republic, has been extended diplomatic recognition by the United States after a rupture which began in 1932. Washington reports would make it appear that normal relations were re-established only after Liberia had given guarantees that rights of the native tribes in the interior would be respected. The country is ruled by a comparatively small number of descendants of American Negroes and exploitation of the natives has been a scandal for many

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years. American recognition does not mean any lessening of this oppression. In reality, recognition had been withheld until the republic acceded to terms demanded by the Firestone Company which has vast rubber concessions in the interior. Agreement to the Firestone terms preceded recognition by only a few days. Great Britain and the United States have been waging a bitter struggle for Liberia's rubber-growing territory for a number of years and the recent farcical election in which Edwin Barclay retained the presidency signalized the triumph of the United States. Significantly enough, Great Britain has announced that she will not resume diplomatic relations with Liberia, basing her refusal on the assertion that native tribesmen are still being oppressed. It is clear that this interplay of humanitarian professions only masks opposing imperialistic designs and that the United States has reduced another theoretically independent nation to the status of a dependency.

Victory in Newark

AS WE go to press we learn of a solid victory against police repression won by the Newark Collective Theatre. Two weeks ago we reported the fascist manner in which the Newark municipal authorities prevented this working-class theatre from giving its performance of *Waiting for Lefty, They Shall Not Die* and *Laid-Off,* three plays of social protest scheduled for June 2. Nine members of the cast and audience were arrested when squads of police raided Ukrainian Hall, almost precipitating a panic by turning off the lights in the packed hall. The acting organization had been intimidated during an entire week preceding the arrests. The police had cancelled the permit previously granted for the Newark Art School and had condemned the hall which the theatre rented as a substitute. Four hours before the performance in the third hall, guides had to be stationed to direct the audience—and the copious newspaper publicity about the "Banned Plays" contributed toward increasing the number of those who came. When the riot squads broke up the show the audience marched en masse to police headquarters, demanding the release of the nine who had been arrested.

THE manner in which the Newark Collective Theatre smashed this repression might be studied as a model of procedure. Working in conjunction with the National Committee Against Censorship of the Theatre Arts and the New Theatre League, the Newark Collective players immediately publicized the municipal action in such periodicals as Time, THE NEW MASSES, etc., bringing it to the attention of over a million readers. The New Theatre League mailed petition blanks to its 300 member-groups, which poured into the offices of the Newark officials. Supplementing these petitions came a barrage of protests from prominent dramatists, critics, clerics and trade-union leaders representing a diversity of political sympathies. Finally a mass protest meeting was organized in the Universalist Church (opposite Newark City Hall and Jail). Over 800 people packed the church, an overflow crowd participated in the action in another hall, and hundreds had to be turned away. The united front program of speakers included Clifford Odets, author of one of the banned plays, Rabbi Newman, Hi Gordon of the Communist Party, John Gassner of the Theatre Guild, Richard Moore of the International Labor Defense, Joe Gilbert of the Taxi-Drivers' Union, representatives of the Urban League, the Group Theatre and the American Youth Congress and the Essex County Central Labor Council.

DURING the trial following this mass meeting the city officials backed out of their original charge and declared the ban to have been a "mistake." They promised to investigate the conduct of the police department to make sure that no further bans would be made. Immediate permission was granted to the Newark Collective Theatre for the use of the Newark Art School. Although the trial was postponed, bail was refunded and the defendants released on their own recognizance. When the trial takes place, however, it will be turned into a trial of the police department to determine if it has the authority to issue or to deny permits for theatre presentations or public meetings. A report of this significant campaign will be available next week in pamphlet form, issued by the National Committee Against Censorship. We cannot think of a more necessary piece of equipment for any and all theatre groups that intend to pursue their work without submitting to the Chamber of Commerce-inspired taste of dramatic critics in police uniform.

Kidnaping—Legal and Illegal

THE Department of Justice has posed the riddle, "When is a crime not a crime?" and has promptly supplied the answer. When property rights are violated, the entire machinery of the Federal Government swings into action to apprehend the criminal; if, however, the crime is against the working class, the Department of Justice refuses to budge and does everything in its power to obstruct an investigation. This is particularly true when it comes to the modern form of piracy, kidnaping. With the decline of capitalism, the "snatch racket" has become more and more prevalent. The newspapers report the most sensational cases—the Lindbergh, Urschel, Roble and, recently, the Weyerhaeuser kidnapings. Scores of abductions have occurred and continue to occur almost daily. When the wealthy and powerful are held for ransom, the highly-publicized "G" men swing into action without delay. No expense or resource is spared. This is creditable enough—kidnaping is a horrible crime. But it is fully as horrible when militant workers are seized by vigilantes and beaten; when a sheriff hands over Negro workers to vigilantes waiting at the jail door. The Department of Justice refuses to act in these instances. And by so doing it condones lynch law.

AND now, the House of Representatives has taken one more step in the fight against militant labor. A bill has just been speeded through the House and is now in the Senate which authorizes the President to put the National Guard uniform on vigilantes and business men and to transfer such storm troops from state to state to break strikes. The vigilantes have perfected kidnaping as one form of terror. The government would authorize such kidnapings and other similar methods to fight the labor movement. The use of military force has been all too frequent in the past, Representative Marcantonio of New York pointed out in opposing the bill; the new law further expands the ease with which Chambers of Commerce can utilize armed force in any strike situation. Putting uniforms on vigilantes only immunizes them further in their brutal, strong-arm tactics. The Department of Justice launches a drive against kidnaping, while the government gives comfort to terrorists. The dual standard does not enhance respect for the law. In a capitalist state, there

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is no more horrible crime than to build militant, working-class organizations to resist the drive toward a lower standard of living and by so doing threaten the huge profits of the corporations.

New Scottsboro Trials

ACTING under provisions of the Alabama law which state that bail may be set where there is a presumption of innocence, the International Labor Defense will seek to force Judge W. W. Callahan to fix bail for Olen Montgomery and Willie Robertson, two of the Scottsboro boys. The two were selected because of the extreme weakness of the case against them. Both were riding on a car far behind the one on which the fight, around which the frame-up was built, took place. Neither saw the fracas and when he reversed the first Patterson conviction Judge Horton commented that it was "unbelievable" that they were connected with the events for which they were once sentenced to death. The bail hearings will be in the nature of a trial with witnesses present for both the prosecution and the defense. Although Osmond K. Fraenkel and C. B. Powell, I. L. D. attorneys, are ready, the date of the hearing is uncertain because it awaits the convenience of Lieutenant Governor Knight who is now presiding over sessions of the Alabama Senate. Adjournment is expected early in July and the hearing should get under way soon after July 4. Handicapped by lack of funds, the I. L. D. is appealing for $4,000 for expenses. Callahan's personal attitude and the dogged determination of Alabama landlords to railroad the boys to death demand an intensification of mass protest.

The Detroit Wizard

WE HAD been missing the twang of Henry Ford's voice among the spring choristers of recovery. Until the other day, when we heard him announcing a "new spurt to prosperity" and one of those famous $1-a-day raises that have, at intervals, saved the country. Who can blame desperate newspaper editors for heralding his cheerful announcements with streamer headlines? Mr. Ford knows how to make "news" out of advertising, that's all. It isn't everybody who is as smart as that and editors are human. We now expect the papers to give us some more good news about the Ford plants. For instance, we would like to hear them announce that speed-up at Ford's is unheard of, that Mr. Ford never hires spies in his factories, that no Ford departments are on short time, that production has not increased from 4,000 cars a day in February to 5,000 cars a day in March without increase of employment, that the Ford company's surplus has not grown to $580,276,392 during the late lean years when he was said to be paying only $4 and $5 a day.

A FAVORITE saying of Ford workers is that "Ford never gives you anything." More than that, these workers claim that Mr. Ford does not pay the highest wages in the industry. They report that pattern makers at Ford's get $5 a day or 62½ cents an hour while in other automobile plants they get $1.25 an hour to $1.50 an hour. They say that drill-press operators receive $5 to $5.40 for eight hours at Ford's but in another plant the same work earns $6.52½ for a 7½-hour day, and that job setters in some plants are paid nearly twice as much as jobsetters at Ford's. Again, one department in February was turning out 1,200 fenders in eight hours and a month later the same department was speeded up to 1,500 fenders with half the number of men at $5 a day. These workers maintain that week after week Ford gets more work and more production out of fewer men and lower payrolls, that he announced the latest raise from $5 to $6 a day only as the end of production season approaches, and that anyway it was not voluntarily granted, but is the result of intensive union activity and the fear of a strike.

Lumber Strike

THE lumber strike on the West Coast, involving over forty thousand workers, continues despite all the sell-out plans brought forward by the officials of the 4-L union. Muir, the executive of the union, managed to get men back to work in several locals—but when these same workers realized that they had been tricked, they promptly threw over their A. F. of L. bureaucratic leadership and re-struck. When the employers saw that they could no longer depend on Muir as a wedge to break the strike, they fell back on the Red scare and on vigilante terror. At the Bridal Veil plant near Portland, Ore., 237 have been arrested. Scores of pickets at the Stimson mill near Forrest Grove, Ore., were seized, beaten, herded down the highway. But the strike mounts despite this pressure; with the support of the West Coast Federation of Marine Unions which refuses to touch scab lumber, production dropped 97,000,000 feet in May as compared to April. The Governors of Washington and Oregon threaten martial law and spur on the terror against the workers. But if troops move into Portland or Seattle, the workers threaten to retaliate with a general strike.

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The Glory of R. P. I.

THE STORM of protest over the dismissal of Granville Hicks from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute failed to move Acting-President Edwin S. Jarrett from his position that the firing of R. P. I.'s outstanding teacher was a matter of "retrenchment." For a month Jarrett stood like a rock; he refused to explain, he refused to amplify, to discuss or to meet a delegation from the American Civil Liberties Union. But on June 15, in the soothing presence of the Alumni Association of R. P. I., Mr. Jarrett unbent, melted, caved in and totally collapsed, as far as his previous position went. He told the alumni:

> The excess of academic freedom must be stigmatized as academic license. We adhere to an unwritten regulation of long standing that there shall be excluded from our classrooms all controversial discussion about politics, religion and sociology. Time devoted to such subjects when used to arouse or incite, is, if we are to cling to our function as an engineering school, lost time.

Jarrett here ignored the plain and unchallenged evidence that at no time did Granville Hicks use his class room to bring forward the Communist position which he has frankly and forcefully upheld outside the class room. Naturally the alumni applauded, and Mr. Jarrett went on to his peroration:

> We were founded by a capitalist of the old days. We have developed and prospered under the capitalistic regime. The men we have sent forth and who have become industrial leaders have, in their generosity, and for the benefit of the youth of the country, richly endowed us. We have trained men eager to work under that system, full of confidence that the doctrine of rugged individualism is the doctrine which, supported by strong self effort and self sacrifice, fighting bravely the battle of legitimate competition will bring to them financial independence and protection from adversity. We are proud of those alumni and we are proud of their adherence to the inexorable human laws. I think we should stand four square to the world and declare our faith. In my opinion as the years pass, time will vindicate us just as surely as the past has approved of us. If we are condemned as the last refuge of conservatism, let us glory in it.

Whereupon the alumni, representing some of the most ruthless exploiters of labor in the country, passed a resolution "endorsing emphatically the position of the Institute authorities." The alumni had another treat in store for them: an apology from the official staff of the Rensselaer Polytechnic student publication, which on May 31 published a stinging editorial, "Mice or Men," denouncing the dismissal of Hicks. The letter of apology ran:

> The article was contributed, not by the Board of Polytechnic, but by a student completing his fellowship course who was not connected with the paper. The article should have appeared, if at all, under the caption "Letters to the Editor." The Polytechnic has no desire to oppose the policies of the Institute.

And lest the rich men who have so "richly endowed" the Institute grow weary of doing good and make their future endowments less rich, the editor-in-chief, J. W. Hawthorne, announced, according to The Troy Times Record, that "with the assistance of Acting President Edwin S. Jarrett, 'we have formulated a plan for making the Polytechnic what it should be'. The letter adds that the board has been reorganized."

This development is particularly interesting in view of a letter we have received from two undergraduate politicians, Walter F. Powers, Jr., grand marshal, and William D. Luening, president, of the Rensselaer Union. Powers and Luening denied that the editorial in the school paper represented any considerable body of student opinion. They said:

> The author of the editorial in the R. P. I. weekly, to which you referred, is in less danger of being "disciplined" as you so diplomatically put it, than are the authors of this letter. The general opinion at Rensselaer, and of Mr. Jarrett is that the article in question was excellently written and deserving of a great amount of credit for, what you might call, its literary value, rather than that the editor has committed "academic suicide." This in itself shows that academic freedom is as far from being stifled at R. P. I. as is freedom of speech in any other democratic community.

Forcing the editor of the school paper to apologize publicly to the rich alumni for an editorial criticizing the dismissal of an outstanding scholar may not be "what you might call" stifling freedom of speech at R. P. I.; in that case freedom of speech there is in an even worse way than we had supposed. But it is clear that R. P. I., in fulfilling its function of supplying efficient and supple-kneed servants of capitalism, is innoculating them early and deeply with the nauseating hypocrisy that distinguishes its acting-president; Mr. Jarrett has reason to be proud of his pupils, Powers and Luening, just as American capitalism has reason to be proud of R. P. I., its incubator of reactionaries.

Let 'Em Eat Grass Roots

"THE Republican party, since Lincoln," says the resolution adopted by the Springfield conference, "progressively gave the workingman the full dinner pail, a living wage and a saving wage." Modestly, the resolutions committee forbore to mention the chicken in every pot. The party is now proposing to give 'em grass roots. Party plugs elevated by dotage of the rank of elder statesmen brought the proceedings to the verge of burlesque. To Almighty God they offered "reverent gratitude"; to labor, "work for the workers"; and to farmers, assurance "that no economic advantage of agriculture thus far attained shall be surrendered." They were equally outspoken on the bonus. "We are grateful for the valiant and sacrificing service of our men of all wars and pledge ourselves to see that justice is accorded them." They believe that "our American political and economic systems . . . are sufficiently flexible to meet all the needs of a complex civilization" but oppose all efforts to make it flex.

Former Governor Lowden, "grass roots' keynoter," struck a terrific blow at Communism in a speech which Mr. Walter Lippmann described as filled "with deep understanding and patriotic fervor." Everett Dean Martin, in his debate with John Strachey, dismissed the Communists as just another bunch of early Christians with millennial delusions. Former Governor Lowden goes

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further. Far from being un-American, the Communists are the original Americans, yes, my friends, none other than the Indians. "There are those who speak of the nationalization of wealth as something new," said Governor Lowden. "Why, it is the oldest thing in the history of the world. The savage tribes in every land and clime have been Communists. Our own Indians are an example. They enjoyed [enjoyed, Governor?] their lands and almost everything else in common. When a famine came they starved in common. The prairies over which they roamed, and which they claimed by tribal titles, remained but hunting grounds." Earl Browder is thus unmasked as just another Sitting Bull. We must also note that Governor Lowden gave the fall of the Roman Empire hell.

Providence moves in mysterious ways its wonders to perform, and even capitalist politicians in their second childhood have their place in the scheme of things. The effort to peddle the same line of fish as Mark Hanna is fantastic but useful. It revives the flagging faith of mired liberals in Mr. Roosevelt. Every loud noise on the Right is taken for evidence that the White House is moving Left. So is Mr. Morgan moving "Left." The free market slogans of earlier capitalism were consigned to the attic long ago in the movement toward monopoly forms and are lugged out only when there is need to block or erase any possible security for the working class.

"There is no proletariat in the United States," Governor Lowden reports, no doubt from personal observation at the Bankers Club. If there is, it should have faith enough in private property and free enterprise to go hungry. The capitalist is not so rugged an individualist and demands his three square meals a day. Only government intervention to bolster monopoly and pour public funds into creaking financial structures can guarantee it. For this the patter of the liberals about the Planned Economy is essential. It provides the theoretical basis for monopoly capitalism. But there comes a time when even Mr. Roosevelt's sweet nothings begin to give the jobless worker and the dispossessed farmer and bankrupt small business man a big pain in the ear. At this point a little dissonance from "grass rooters" and stalwart Young Republicans in the old men's home makes Mr. Roosevelt's liberalism seem dulcet again. They also serve who only stand and prate.

Where Life Is Good

IN America it is considered proper today for valetudinarians to show in their graduation addresses that they realize the shut and hopeless destinies before them. The realities they face are described in the article printed elsewhere in this issue, "Youth Leaves School." Different realities produce different attitudes. Notable is the powerful surge of confidence, the extraordinary sense of dedication expressed in the various valedictory speeches delivered in a socialist state. The following is an address by Anna Mlynek, a sixteen-year-old graduate of Frunze District High School in Moscow on June 1:

"Comrades: It is very difficult to speak today and there is so much to be said. One gropes for words to give the appropriate answer to our dear older comrades, to express what is surging in our breasts—but words seem pale. To think what enormous perspectives open before us, graduates of the ten-year school, what inexhaustible possibilities! Wide and hospitable are the doors leading into a creative, joyous life. Molders, flyers, physicians, collective farmers, teachers, agronomists, literateurs, tractorists, electricians, technicians, regisseurs—each and every one of us is needed in our young and beautiful Soviet Fatherland!

"The poet was right when he exclaimed: 'Life is good. It is so good to live!' In such a land, in such an epoch. Yes, especially in such a land. In the capitalistic countries the boys and girls of our age cannot possibly know such a day of luminous joy as we are celebrating here today. There the boys and girls now graduating from schools have no horizons. They are entering a blind alley. . . .

"We, the first graduating class of the Soviet ten-year school, have been particularly benefited by the great, truly maternal care bestowed upon us students by the Party. . . .

"We were trained not only by pedagogues, we were trained, we were educated by the whole country. Our Soviet land has brought us up on the examples of its splendid party and its leaders, its heroic sons and daughters, on the Chelyuskin epic, on the flight into the stratosphere, on the building of the subway among infinite dramas of creation. It has brought us up on the sweep of its constructions. It has brought us up finally on the realization that there is nothing impossible in the land of rising socialism. We have ascended to the highest point on the globe, the Peak of Stalin. The best subway in the world is the subway of our city. The highest sky is the sky over our land. It has been pushed further back by our heroes of the stratosphere. The deepest seas are our seas. They have been deepened by our bathysphere. It is in our socialist land that they fly best, that they run best, that they study best, that they play best! This is the education given to us by our Party and our country.

"Now we have graduated. Ten years of conscious, serious study are over. Ahead of us are work and study even more serious and more full of responsibilities.

"And who are we? We are the future scholars, workers, engineers, chemists, flyers. We are the artists, the composers, the writers, the poets, the sculptors. We are the chess players, the athletes, the sharp-shooters. Yes, we are what the first generation born in the revolution ought to be. We are the makers of this land called upon to conquer space and time. We count the minutes and the years, the seconds and the centuries. We wish to, we must, we shall live long. Our great tasks need long lives. It is for us, the youth, to carry out Lenin's behest to build a Communist society.

"We are reporting to you, our dear, our beautiful country, to you, our Party, to you our own Joseph Vissarionovich: the cadres are here ready for work and defense. A new generation is advancing and it will be able when necessary to take the place of the older Bolsheviks.

"Heroism in our land doesn't mean senseless tricks in pursuit of fame; it means serious day to day work and struggle. We know that cadres become hardened in vital work, in overcoming difficulties, in and out of school. We shall try to be valuable citizens worthy of the first revolutionary generation. . . .

"We shall always try to be men and women of the Stalin calibre—strong, with steady nerves and stubborn in our struggles.

"Greetings to you our Soviet land, most tender and flaming greetings from your sons and daughters, from that generation which counts its years with the anniversaries of October, which together with you our Soviet loved, is reaching this year the age of majority."

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WHY JAPAN RISKS WAR

New Markets—Tokyo's Lifeline

The following article was written in Tokyo prior to the current Japanese aggression in China, which the anonymous writer forecasts accurately. There can be little doubt now that the Japanese bourgeoisie is seeking to solve internal problems by seizing part of China from which other nations can be excluded. These desperate measures are being resorted to because the development of Japanese monopoly capitalism has created problems which must be solved immediately to forestall revolution. The drive for new outlets in a closed Chinese market serves two purposes. It not only holds out the hope for staving off economic disaster but also that of establishing control over strategic trade routes from Outer Mongolia and thus bring that section within the orbit of Japanese imperialism while at the same time cutting off the Soviet Union from communication with China.—THE EDITORS.

TOKYO.

WHEN Koki Hirota, Japanese foreign minister, declared last fall that the keystone of his foreign policy would be "a practical solution" of the Sino-Japanese question, he left the tacit assumption that the solution would be a peaceful one. There are indications that the negotiations are to be supplemented by force in the very near future. Those familiar with the situation are quite convinced that Japanese imperialists are planning to extend Japanese rule over the North China provinces. From their standpoint subjugation of these provinces is imperative in view of the larger aims which comprehend Japanese hegemony on the mainland. Japan will control the trade routes of Outer Mongolia through Chahar and Urga and will be placed in a position where she has severed direct connection of the Soviet Union with China proper. Of more immediate importance is the fact that the conquest will open up a vast new market. Japan's conquests on the Asiatic mainland are already known in Tokyo as Nippon's "lifeline." Japan, without new markets and new sources for raw materials which her "God-given islands" are lacking, will founder in the not distant future. And vast Asia is less than a day's distance by battleship. Warboats will undoubtedly be necessary, for Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese authorities, corrupt as they may be, cannot cede these markets to Japan without at least the appearance of a struggle and a conflict is almost bound to develop. Even if Chiang submits without a fight the hatred of the Chinese millions for the invaders from the Eastern Islands will precipitate some sort of conflict—whether it be "official war" or "unofficial guerilla" operations on a wide scale.

The whole question of Japanese expansion on the mainland is bound up with the quest for markets. The Nipponese home market is peculiarly restricted due to the survival of semi-feudal agricultural economy and the heavy burden of armament expenditures. The stiffening of British and American resistance to Japanese exports to other markets is making itself felt and it is apparent that a closed market must be found. Despite some formal success in forcing Chinese authorities to abate the anti-Japanese boycott, it is clear that popular resistance to the purchase of imperial products cannot be wiped out unless sterner methods are taken. Since the seizure of Manchuria in 1931 there has been a revival in Japanese industry but reports for April indicate that a recession is taking place despite activity in war industries. It was chiefly the manufacture of death-dealing materials that caused the artificial "boom" in Japanese economy these past few years. The economic situation in Japan is dominated completely by the preparations of Japanese imperialism for war. The problem is, how long can Japan's comparatively weak economic system stand this enormous strain?

The preparations for war are best reflected in the Japanese budget. The official estimate for the financial year 1935-36 in millions of yen follows:

Total expenditure (including army and navy 1,021)	2,122
Total revenue	1,402
Deficit	720

Open war expenditures total 48 percent of the budgetary expenditure. It is more difficult to ascertain what extent of the budget goes for secret preparations.

However, commodity prices are declining. To quote The Oriental Economist: "Ever since last fall there have been indications of a slackening down of the feverish pace of industrial and business improvements."

These are danger signs of internal weakness and indicate the necessity for quick action. Ever since her rise as a modern nation Japan has used one unfailing formula to pull herself out of economic crises: imperialist expansion on the mainland. She followed that formula in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894, in the war with Russia in 1904, in the world war and more recently in the Manchuria adventure. The logic of her own policy seems to dictate that course again. Natural calamities, too, play their part. The year 1934 was unkind to the rulers (not to speak of the exploited) of Japan.

A fearful typhoon swept across the islands, resulting in enormous property damage and widespread loss of life. The gods of the harvest were unkind too: the yield of the rice harvest was exceedingly low. The production of natural silk fell by 22 percent, partly on account of frost and the damage done to the mulberry trees by the typhoon, but also due to the low prices paid the Japanese peasantry for the cocoons by the big monopolies. As a result of the bad harvest the price of rice rose from 20 yen the koku to 29 yen—a circumstance favorable for the rich peasants and rice speculators but fatal to the poor peasants. As a matter of fact there is outright famine amongst the lowest strata of peasantry this year.

The cessation of the depreciation of the yen in the latter part of 1934 created new difficulties, particularly for the export trade. The increase in industrial production practically came to a standstill in the second half of 1934. The disproportion between the prices of export and import commodities, in connection with the relative stability of the yen during the last six months of the past year, led to a slowing down of the Japanese drive into the world markets. Japanese exporters are forced to throw ever newer types of commodities on the market in new countries at dumping prices in order to obtain the wherewithal for foreign payments necessary to purchase raw materials and equipment.

The Rise of Japanese Monopoly

JAPAN'S internal weakness centers the trend toward monopoly and the consequent ruination of small business and poor farmers. For example, recent bank statements show that the larger banks—particularly the Big Six: Sumitomo, Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sanwa, Dai-ichi and Yasuda—equalled or surpassed net earnings over previous periods. On the other hand many smaller banks were forced to reduce or pass dividends. Back of these figures lies the fact that the larger concerns, bankers for monopolists and basic industrialists, are able to find ready fields for investment. Smaller banks are hard-pressed to find sound fields for their capital with the small scale capitalists. The truth is that small factory owners are not sharing in the "prosperity" that was artificially induced in 1931 by means of the Manchurian adventure and the consequent need for war supplies, both for that imperialistic transaction and for the planned conflict with the Soviet Union.

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Progress of Japanese Imperialist Aggression in China

The basic industries, as is well known, have been concerned with the production of war materials. So long as the government uses a disproportionate share of its budget for war materials, that long will the larger concerns be able to make profits. For Japan's chief export article, silk, is meeting with growing market difficulties. The following figures are revealing:

Value of Japanese Silk Exports
(in million yen)

1925	1929	1932	1933	1934
880	608	413	337	250

When we consider the depreciation of the yen (65 percent) we see that the sum obtained for Japanese silk export in 1934 was but a sixth of 1929's total.

Monopoly, with its ability to jack up prices and beat down wages, creates its own home problem. It is an open secret that wage earners have not shared in the "prosperity" since 1931. Wage rates continue to fall. Prices rise precipitously. So obvious is the falling standard of living that foreign observers have accused Japan of trying to achieve prosperity at the expense of mass living standards, a criticism to which Japanese publicists are very sensitive. Strikes have grown in scope and frequency since the recession of patriotic fervor whipped up during the Manchurian war. Rationalisation of industry is rendered easier by concentration of industry and with that goes the possibility of the use of low-paid, unskilled labor at the expense of the other higher-paid, skilled workers.

Anybody in the know doubts that the Japanese bourgeoisie is doing its utmost to compensate itself for the poorer export possibilities by exercising increasing pressure on the workers. According to the figures of the Bank of Japan (1926 = 100) nominal wages fell to 82.6 in September, 1934, as compared with 84.7 in September, 1933. This reduction of nominal wages occurred at the same time the cost of living index shot up. That index, according to the Bank of Japan, rose from 147.3 in January, 1934, to 150.1 on Oct. 1, 1934. Even this source, certainly not well disposed toward the proletariat, admits that during the year real wages fell by about 4 percent.

As to the peasant—his position is almost unbearable. [See following article.]

The real problem facing Japanese industrialists is that of making their aggressions palatable to workers and peasants. The bait dangled before them is, in the main, the theory that only expansion can make Japanese industry secure and give it the ability to extend employment. The peasants being forced off the land are told that the nation is over-populated and are intrigued with the prospect that seizures of colonies will provide them with land.

Is The Army Independent?

DESPITE glowing pictures of a future Great Japan, the imperialists would find it difficult to gain support for their adventures were it not for the peculiar part the military plays in Japanese life. Much has been made in the foreign press of the independent character of the army and its refusal to brook interference from civil authorities when it decides on a policy. There is some basis for this theory and there have been cases in which the Foreign Ministry has been overridden by army chieftains but it is wrong to regard the military as an entirely independent force. The army and navy do have a traditional independence; for instance army and navy ministers are not responsible to Parliament or the cabinet. They may report directly to the Emperor and none but generals and admirals may head the army and navy departments. In this sense they are representative of the old feudal hierarchy which centers around the imperial household and are assured of a minimum of freedom of action.

We must note that the industrialists have never refused to take advantage of the opportunities afforded them by military conquests and that once an adventure is embarked upon all resistance ceases. Japanese capitalists have much to gain from deliberately furthering the theory of the independence of the military. It gives them a valuable diplomatic weapon since they can hide their complicity behind disavowals of responsibility. The theory of independence of the military is valuable in another respect; the militarists have free play to gain support for conquest by simulating opposition to gross capitalist abuses.

Every acute observer has been struck by the fact that the army is the "radical" opposition to capitalism. General Araki has been very active in that respect and some of his anti-capitalistic pronouncements have a surprising ring to the uninitiated. Of course this sound and fury has never prevented Araki's participation in the government nor has it hindered his own close association with large industrialists. The militarists have thus been able to assume a certain leadership over the discontented middle class and peasants by posing as their friends and protectors. During the Manchurian war the army was the center for pronouncements that the gains to be made would not be permitted to fall into the hands of the capitalists but would be preserved for all of the people. In practice, quite the opposite has happened. Again, it is the army which lures peasants with the hope of territorial gains for the solution of overpopulation.

Every statistical report reveals the fact that the recent aggressions are responsible for economic revival and that gains thus made possible for basic industry have enhanced the control of monopolists over all phases of Japanese life. Even the landlords have been sucked into the orbit of the ever more powerful finance capitalists. They are not opposed to these policies which have feathered their own nests. There is no denying that the army is moved by its own special outlook and that the pouring out of funds for its own benefit drives it to further and further activity.

Of course, certain capitalists not interested in heavy industry are opposed to their rivals and it is equally true that capitalists, afraid of overplaying the conquest game, may try now and then to put the brakes on the army's headstrong plunge into mainland adventures. But they are all riding the tiger and to dismount is as hazardous as to continue the ride.

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"Japan Must Drive Ahead"

CESSATION of aggression on the mainland would disrupt the entire structure of Japanese economy geared to war time production. The consequent shocks might lead to open outbreaks at home as the shutdown of factories led to unemployment. As the imperialistes see it, there is nothing to do but drive forward and seize large new Chinese territories where the open door can be slammed shut just as it was in Manchuria. In addition the seizure of that territory means the tapping of the raw markets of Mongolia as well as providing an outlet for manufactured goods there.

As a long range project the seizure of this territory will strike a blow at the Soviet Union. Japanese military experts believe that the trade routes give them an open road to the cutting of Siberian connections from European Russia in the vicinity of Lake Baikal and in the last analysis the Japanese fear the Soviet Union more than any other factor. They are determined to provoke conflict despite the Russian peace policy. They want to do it as soon as possible.

All of these war calculations must be balanced against conditions at home and the temper of the Japanese workers and peasants. Recent statistics indicate that there are 2,540,000 workers in concerns employing more than 12 workers. The total number of workers including those engaged in fishing and agriculture is estimated at approximately 5,770,000. Of these only about 380,000 are organized in trade unions. Those in unions of the extreme right include about 20 percent of the number. The unions of the center in which the leadership is committed in advance to any government move comprise 70 percent and the more independent unions number about 10 percent. Unions under revolutionary leadership have been "abolished" and their leaders driven underground.

However, within all of the unions there is a ferment of opposition leadership which demands a positive policy against the decreasing standards of living and positive strike action is on the increase.

Average wages of all workers is close to one yen and 57 sen per day, the rough equivalent of 46 cents. Skilled workers especially those in the favored heavy, *i.e.* war industries, may earn as much as 7 or 8 yen but the rising costs of foodstuffs operate to the disadvantage of all workers. Hours are long and industrial safeguards at a low level. Even the best paid skilled worker generally finds his earnings insufficient to provide a living for his family and women and children are forced to supplement the earnings in the majority of cases.

The gains in heavy industry not only spell profits; they breed a true proletariat and it is significant that the most independent and militant workers are to be found here. Any drive toward war must take these things into account and the dissatisfaction attendant on lowered living standards is giving the government some pause. Japan is lush with "patriotic" societies of all kinds, all of them tainted with fascist teachings and all calculated to hold the wavering fervor of the workers in line for conquest.

The crisis through which Japan is passing is the same as that being experienced by other nations under the domination of monopoly capitalism. Her rulers are seeking to escape the nemesis of proletarian revolution through imperialist expansion and fascism. Every step they take intensifies the problems and hastens the day of reckoning. A complicating factor is the survival of feudal forms which accentuate the antagonism between the peasantry and the landowners. It is possible that revolution may have its genesis in the struggles of the peasants when they assimilate the lesson that swashbuckling adventures cannot alleviate their lot. As a practical matter the hope for revolutionary success lies in the ability of the peasants and workers to forge a working alliance for a final overthrow of capitalism. The underground Communist party carries on toward this goal despite the arrests of thousands and their torture in the Mikado's jails. The wave of strikes grows—in the armies, among the peasants, in the cities.

Famine In the Countryside

SOMA HARUTA

VOICES of thin, barefooted, half-starved children shout and beg beside the train as it passes through the desolated fields of the Japanese countryside. They call: "Mister, please throw us your left-over lunch from the window of the train."

This is in the northern part of Japan, where famine has swept over whole sections of the farming population. Millions of peasants and their wives and children have nothing to eat. Some peasants committed suicide when they found no crops in the fields where they had toiled every day from morning to dark.

Many schools have been closed; children, led by their teachers, climb up the hills and crawl among the rocks, grubbing for roots, hunting for seeds and leaves of grass—whatever can be eaten by human beings. Many children have stomach trouble: undigested seed and roots are found in their vomit.

In some villages, chopped straw mixed with water sustains the lives of the peasants. In Iwate prefecture where the famine is most severe, the peasants' total debt reaches as high as 100,000,000 yen, or an average of 1,000 yen per family (or $280). When three banks in the prefecture went bankrupt during the financial crisis of 1932, many lost their life-savings and some of them committed suicide.

Peasants who have already sunk to the bottom of misery are selling their daughters into prostitution in order to sustain the rest of the family. The young girls are sold for from 50 to 200 yen ($14 to $59) and will be held as prostitutes for most of their lives. At Fuchi village (population 900) in Iwate prefecture more than one hundred girls have disappeared from the village since last spring. No young girls are left there. It is called the "village without girls." Peasant girls lost in the red-light district number 200,000, and every year 30,000 or 40,000 more girls are sold as public prostitutes.

The Japanese government had for a while ordered the suppression of news about mass starvation among the peasants on the ground that such news may stimulate unrest. One of the most powerful bourgeois mazaines, The Central Review, was suppressed on account of an article which described the misery of the peasants. However, after the passage of the largest war budget in Japanese history had finally been passed there was no more reason to keep the wholesale starvation secret. At present, however, the government feverishly appeals to the public through the press and radio to relieve the peasants in the villages from misery and starvation. This zealous campaign seeks "relief" at the expense of the exploited masses. All government employes have already been forced to donate to the relief fund from their small salaries.

As soon as the censorship was ended the government officials and politicians, pretending to be rescuers, rushed to the famine district. I quote part of a letter written by a peasant who is distrustful of these investigators and such anti-government sentiments are common in the poverty-stricken villages. It says: "The failure of crops, or rather a famine, has again spread in the northern part of Japan, but the tax has never been reduced. The government officials came here to help us, but we know they did nothing for us in those years when we had bad crops for several seasons. We are tired of talk. All those who came here stayed at the best hotel in town and rolled down in expensive cars to the famine villages for the investigation, and the next day they rested at the nearby hot springs, waited upon by the geisha girls. . . ."

As for the peasants, more than two-thirds of them in early June, long before the harvest, had sold out to the last grain of rice which should have been saved for their own food. The workers in the city, of course, have been exploited at starvation wages and can hardly buy rice at any price.

When 1933 brought a good harvest, peasants suffered from the low price of rice. Then

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a law for the government regulation of rice was passed in the name of the "protection of peasants," and 400,000,000 yen was spent by the government for the purchase of rice. More than 10,000,000 *koku* of rice were delivered to government warehouses and added to several million *koku* from previous crops.

The big landlords and speculators have been holding enormous quantities of rice, expecting a rise in price under the new policy. Rice is piled like mountains in hundreds of warehouses. After the peasants had sold out their rice crop, they were forced to buy it back at higher prices than they had received for it.

In spite of the failure of rice and other crops, the percentage of the share crops, tax, interest rate, prices of fertilizer and other necessities for the peasant have been rising through the policy of inflation for the war in Manchuria. The peasant side-jobs at home, such as the cultivation of the silk worm and poultry raising, have become less and less profitable. Opportunities for labor during the dead season of the farmers in the construction works of the village, road or bridge building have been growing rarer. The peasant has lost possibility of selling his family's labor-power which covered a great part of the peasant living expense. He now earns so little that he cannot pay his interest, and his debts rise with accelerating rapidity. The total indebtedness of the agrarian population of all Japan has now reached the enormous sum of over 10 billion yen. Moreover, the landlord, the money lender and tax collector knock at his door every day for taxes and other debts.

At one time peasant girls streamed to the cities to become factory workers, to help their distressed families. Their small wages were the only means of saving the peasant household from the actual menace of starvation. Now most of them are forced back to their native villages, although some industries have been booming because of war inflation and dumping due to the lower rate of yen on the foreign exchange. If they still have a job, their wages are less than half as compared with 1929. Especially after the invasion of Manchuria, the speed-up, longer hours of labor and low wages have mercilessly attacked the standards of the peasant girls. The increasing profit since the war, among the ruling class of Japan, has come in part through the increasing exploitation of the miserable peasant girls. They toil from ten to thirteen hours a day and receive from five cents to sixteen cents a day. Unemployed in the city have been driven to the native villages, looking for a shelter with their parents, relatives and friends. There is no relief at all for an army of 4,500,000 unemployed in Japan.

In 1932, 200,000,000 yen was expended for public work to relieve peasants, unemployed and small business men in answer to mass pressure. It was nothing compared to the need. Minister of Finance Takahashi at that time declared this expenditure would continue at least three years, but the following year it was greatly reduced owing to the large war expenditure. This relief work was forced labor by the government at wages of seven cents to seventeen cents a day.

The peasant in the villages of Japan is thin as a rail. Undernourished, overworked in the field and on the extra work at home, in anguish with his burdens of debt and tax, he is exhausted and has no strength to work. There is much sickness. In Aomori prefecture 4,943 peasant households out of 42,000 were admitted by the government as destitute and needy cases. Half of them are ill and without any medical aid. To this some of the reduced production may be attributed.

In the first nine months of 1934, 4,000 conflicts between the landlord and share-cropper were recorded. In the first nine months of 1932, 2,103 conflicts had been recorded. In fear of the rising wave of the peasant struggle, the ruling class of Japan, represented by the government, is entering as a mediator of the struggle between the landlord and the peasant, organizing committees for the prevention of conflict in every village.

These usually consist of the chief of police, village head man, one representative of the landlord and one of the peasants in the villages; but at the same time, terror has been intensified against the militant peasants. In the prefectures of Nigata, Saitama, Ibaragi, Shizuoka, Okayama, and Kumamoto, the militant peasant struggle has spread despite all kinds of propaganda for patriotism and terror during the three years of the Manchurian invasion. The peasant, led by the militant farmers' union, is rising against oppression, demanding free rice from the government warehouses and striking against the payment of tax, debts and share crops.

Buick Strikes Back

ADAM SMYTHE

CHAGRINED and smarting under the concessions, insignificant though they were, to labor at Toledo, and apprehensive of sympathy strikes at other plants, the master minds of General Motors are attempting to strike back. They are determined, for one thing, that there shall be no more bottle necks in their production lines; and to that effect are equipping Muncie, as well as Toledo, for the production of transmissions. Arrangements are being made for duplicate plants on similar vital parts in various sections of the country. Other generalissimos of the General Motors' strategy corps are at work on various schemes to keep labor in the place where they think it belongs. It remains, however, for Buick to conceive and execute one of the cleverest ideas yet foisted on the working man and one calculated to frustrate every concession that labor has gained in the last few years.

Studying Buick's new maneuver proves that, though denied by governmental interference the right to intimidate and coerce workers through the police system, the industry under Buick has evolved a corps of storm troopers under the guise of "The Buick Safety League."

The introduction of safeguards into industry to protect lives and limbs is not new, but Buick's interpretation of safety measures through their "protective" use of the loaded billy points to a new trend in living up to the letter of the word. The mechanics of the plan being that Flint officials have inveigled some six hundred volunteers into this league, ostensibly organized to prevent sabotage in case of strikes. With superintendents as majors, assistant superintendents as captains and lieutenants, foremen as sergeants and patrolmen recruited ambiguously from the ranks of labor itself, a batallion emerges to lie in wait for any worker questioning the latest speed-up, lay-off or "readjustment of piece rate."

Thus, the plan provides against the curiosity of the press with the advent of trouble. Agitations can be shown to have come from within and quelled from within; and the Wagner Disputes Bill can be ostensibly observed because the Safety Leaguers are volunteers, "representing" employes and having their welfare at heart. In recompense for their work, the Safety Leaguers are automatically placed upon the preferred list for work and when they attend the League meetings, sponsored by the management's propganda committee, they are given full pay for the time lost from their machines. When mobilized for active duty, the billies are to be provided them gratis by the company.

The plan is no longer in a tentative stage. With two majors, one for days and one for nights, commanding the works, it now operates twenty-four hours of the day. Each building has its captain reporting regularly to the plant major. Under the captains are the alert lieutenants and sergeants listening and watching in their divisions, reporting hourly every bit of information received from the patrolmen in the bays themselves. Any exception taken to a worker's conversation or comments during the course of his duty is recorded on a card in the main office and the man is watched for further digressions.

Should a strike, despite such military surveillance, break out among the workers, the Safety League goes into action and within fifteen minutes army discipline is in control of the plant. Patrolmen, armed with billies, move up and down the bays. Sergeants and lieutenants report constantly to their captains, while the major, in the main office, holds his conferences and discusses strategy. Any ensuing intimidation can be reported officially as a plant brawl.

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What Is Communism?

8. Americanism—Who Are the Americans?

EARL BROWDER

NONE of the correspondents of THE NEW MASSES has sent in any questions about the good old standbys of "Americanism" and its relation to Communism. And yet this series would not be complete, it would have a serious gap, if we pass it over in silence. After all, the one question asked of Communists more than all others, if we can judge from the daily newspapers, is this:

"If you don't like this country, why don't you go back where you came from?"

Truth is, if you insist on knowing, Mr. Hearst, we Communists like this country very much. We cannot think of any other spot on the globe where we would rather be than exactly this one. We love our country. Our affection is all the more deep in that we have watered it with the sweat of our labor in the gigantic efforts of the workers that made this country what it is; our mothers nourished it with the tears they shed over the troubles and tragedies of rearing babies in a land controlled by profit and profit-makers. If we did not love our country so much, perhaps we would surrender it to Wall Street.

Of course when we speak of our love of America, we mean something quite different from what Mr. Hearst is speaking about in his daily editorial diatribes. We mean we love the masses of the toiling people. We find in these *masses* a great reservoir of all things admirable and lovable, all things that make life worth living. We are filled with anger when we see millions of these people we love being degraded more and more, starved, oppressed and beaten and jailed when they protest. We develop a deep and moving hatred against the system and against those who fatten on the system that turns our potential paradise into a living hell.

We are determined to save our country from the hell of capitalism. And most of us were born here, so Hearst's gag is not addressed to us anyway. But workers in America who happen to have been born abroad are just as much Americans as anybody else. We all originated across the waters, except perhaps a tiny minority of pure-blooded Indians. And the foreign-born workers have worked harder for less wages on behalf of this country than anybody else and deserve, at the minimum, a little courtesy from those who would speak of Americanism. There is less historical justification in America than perhaps in any other major country for that narrow nationalism, that chauvinism, that makes a cult of a "chosen people." We in America are a mongrel breed and we glory in it. We are the products of a melting pot of a couple of hundred nationalities. Our origin as a nation acknowledged its debt to a Polish Kosciusko, a French Lafayette and countless other "foreigners."

Furthermore, let's be careful not to get snooty about pedigrees; half the names in the American social register originated in men who were transported from Europe on conviction of crime or who in the new country became bold bandits and buccaneers. It was the more aggressive and violent types who rose to the top most quickly in our early days and laid the foundations of the great American fortunes. They were the Al Capones of their day, with no income-tax department to bring them to grief.

We love also the past history of America and its masses, in spite of the Astors and Vanderbilts. We find in it a wealth of tradition striped in the purple tints of glory —the glory of men and women fighting fearlessly and self-sacrificingly against the throttling hand of a dead past, for those things upon which further progress depended.

Around the birth of our country as an independent nation cluster such heroic names as those of Patrick Henry, whose famous shout, "As for me, give me liberty or give me death!" re-echoes down the corridors of time; of Thomas Paine, whose deathless contribution to our national life of a militant anti-clericalism has long survived the many pamphlets with which he fought, the form of which already belongs to a past age; of Thomas Jefferson, whose favorite thought revolved about watering the tree of liberty with the blood of tyrants (he thought this "natural manure" should be applied to the tree about every twenty years!); of all the founding fathers, whose chief, when not only, claim to glory lies in their "treason" to the "constitutional government" of their day, and among whom the most opprobrious epithet was "loyalist."

These men, in their own time, faced the issues of the day, cut through the red tape of legalism and constitutionalism with a sword, made revolutions, killed off a dying and outworn system and opened up a new chapter in world history.

Our American giants of 1776 were the "international incendiaries" of their day. They inspired revolutions throughout the world. The great French Revolution, the reverberations of which filled Europe's ears for the entire nineteenth century, took its first steps under the impulse given by the American revolution. The Declaration of Independence was for that time what the Communist Manifesto is for ours. Copy all the most hysterical Hearst editorials of today against Moscow, Lenin, Stalin, substitute the words America, Washington, Jefferson, and the result is an almost verbatim copy of the diatribes of English and European reactionary politicians in the closing years of the eighteenth century against our American founding fathers. Revolution was then "an alien doctrine imported from America" as now it is "imported from Moscow."

After the *counter-revolution* engineered by Alexander Hamilton had been victorious and established itself under *the Constitution* in 1787, a period of reaction set in. That was, like our modern days since the World War, a period of oppressive legislation which went down in history as the "Alien and Sedition Laws." But the American masses had not been mastered; those who rode high and mighty with their eighteenth century counter-parts of criminal syndicalism laws, deportations, Dicksteins and McCormicks, were driven out of power in a struggle, often bloody and violent, which again for a period placed the representatives of the masses (then predominantly agrarian) in control of government.

The greatest figure of them all in the American tradition, Abraham Lincoln, became great because he, despite his own desire to avoid or compromise the struggle, was forced by history to lead to victory a long and bloody civil war whose only historical significance was the wiping out of chattel slavery, the destruction of private property in persons, the amending of the Constitution in the only way it has ever been fundamentally amended. Lincoln's words which still live today among the masses, are those which declared:

> This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it.

These words of Lincoln are but a paraphrasing of the Declaration of Independence. Our national holiday, July 4, is in memory of the giving to the world of that immortal document of American history. The very heart of the Declaration, that which gives it life, without which all else becomes empty phrases, are these lines, the memory of which had grown dim until the Communists rescued them from the dust of libraries:

> Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends [life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness], it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers in such forms,

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> as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. . . . When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them [the masses] under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security.

This is the heart of the American tradition. Without this revolutionary kernel, the whole history of our country becomes only the strutting of marionettes and stuffed shirts, the spread-eagle oratory of the Fourth of July under imperialism, the vulgar yappings of the Hearst press. Patriotism becomes, as that acid critic of the British bourgeoisie, Dr. Johnson, described it: "The last refuge of a scoundrel."

The revolutionary tradition is the heart of Americanism. That is incontestable, unless we are ready to agree that Americanism means what Hearst says, slavery to outlived institutions, preservation of privilege, the degradation of the masses.

We Communists claim the revolutionary traditions of Americanism. We are the only ones who continue those traditions and apply them to the problems of today.

We are the Americans and Communism is the Americanism of the twentieth century.

That does not mean, of course, that we Communists raise the slogan of "Back to 1776." Such reactionary stupidity was committed by the LaFollette "third-party" movement in 1924, typical as that movement was of a class-grouping that had lost any historical progressive meaning. That was no more in the spirit of our revolutionary forefathers, than it would have been for the Declaration of Independence to proclaim "Back to the Republic of Rome." To each day its own tasks; that of 1776 was to free the rising capitalism from the fetters of a dying feudal system, enabling it to expand the productive forces of mankind to a new high level; that of today is to free these tremendous productive forces created by capitalism but now being choked and destroyed because they have grown too big to live longer under capitalist property relations.

Americanism, in this revolutionary sense, means to stand in the forefront of human progress. It means never to submit to the forces of decay and death. It means constantly to free ourselves of the old, the outworn, the decaying and to press forward to the young, the vital, the living, the expanding. It means to fight like hell against those who would plow under the crops in our fields, who would close down and scrap our factories, who would keep millions of willing toilers, anxious to create the good things of life, living like beggars upon charity.

Americanism, as we understand it, means to appropriate for our country all the best achievements of the human mind in all lands. Just as the men who wrote the Declaration of Independence had been nurtured upon the French Encyclopedists and the British classical political economists, so the men who will write our modern Declaration of Independence of a dying capitalist system must feed themselves upon the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the modern representatives of human progress.

In the words of a famous American whose memory we love, we say to Mr. Hearst and all the Red-baiting cohorts of Wall Street:

"If that be treason, make the most of it."

This is how we American Communists read the history of our country. This is what we mean by Americanism. This is how we love our country, with the same burning love which Lenin bore for Russia, his native land. Like Lenin, we will fight to free our land from the blood-sucking reactionaries, place it in the hands of the masses and bring it into the international brotherhood of a World Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

In his ninth article, next week, Earl Browder will discuss the question of a Labor Party.

Letters from Readers

COMMENT BY EARL BROWDER

Will Communists "Sell Out"?

Earl Browder,
c/o NEW MASSES.

I cannot bring myself to agree with you and other Communist writers who advocate sudden or violent revolution as a method of establishing a planned social system. There is one grave question which serves as the greatest obstacle in the way of an indorsement of your viewpoint. I am sure that it is of greatest importance that you answer this question, or at least realize its presence; for it is undoubtedly in the minds of millions of people with radical leanings. And it would appear that they are kept, more than anything else by the dark shadow of uncertainty cast by this question, from placing their shoulders whole-heartedly to the wheel of any revolutionary movement. I state this question as follows:

In the May 14 issue of THE NEW MASSES, in your treating of the question, "What Is Communism?" you give a brief history of various parties that have in the past designated themselves as "Socialist." You show how the party leaders had finally "adjusted themselves to capitalism and to the desires of the capitalist class. They had been absorbed into the capitalist ruling machine . . . repudiating, overnight, all their pledges for uncompromising struggle against war . . . which meant the cessation of struggle for the interests of the workers." In short, the leaders "double-crossed" their followers and "sold out" to the capitalistic interests.

The question, then, is this:

What assurance is there that the Communist leaders would not do the same?

All perusal of history teaches us that never in spite of all the "successful" revolutions of the past have the people been lifted from oppression or the blight of exploitation. The leaders have used their power to further their own ends, and while they have lived upon the fat of the land, the great masses have remained still economically insecure. What, then, is to assure us that the Communist leaders of today have a higher and more permanent ratio of love for humanity over self than all the great revolutionary leaders of history? Than the above-mentioned Socialist leaders? Than even the common politicians of today, who do practically everything but carry out their campaign promises? You realize, my friend, that a revolution is a tremendous thing. Is it not too much, then, considering human nature, and in the light of the above, to expect that thinking people should faithfully believe that a certain group of men have suddenly taken upon themselves Messianic attributes—to love, forever, humanity more than themselves—to give themselves rather than exploit others—to serving, rather than being served?

We need an economical and political revolution, but first we must have an educational revolution. There is far too much diversification of opinion due to ignorance and distortion of the facts. Because of this, if there were a revolution tomorrow, nothing but a dictatorship and its co-partner, fascism, could maintain stability.

Four million of the people of our country can neither read nor write in any language. Millions of our children are given no school education beyond the fourth grade. The great majority of our adult population understand nothing of the fundamentals of economics or government. My mother, for instance, is firmly possessed by the conviction that the depression was caused by women entering politics. A university upper-classman next door believes that our troubles could be solved by taking the married women out of the commercial world.

"The foundation of a stable government," says Robert Quillen, "is a population dumb enough not to realize what is going on." He is undoubtedly right. But fortunately that is not the *only* foundation. We have an alternative—a population smart enough to govern itself. Our people are just beginning to realize that there is something wrong and to precipitate trouble, threatening the stability of our present order. But they are as yet far too uneducated to bring about and maintain a social system subservient to their own interests.

It would appear that our only hope is in the slow and painful process of educational and democratic revolution. As education becomes more and more universal, as it is raised to a higher and higher plane, and as people come to a closer and closer intimacy with the facts (and they will, in spite of propaganda, even as people finally accepted the Copernican cosmology despite the tremendous sophism of "orthodoxy"), an efficient social system will be established by the sheer weight of popular opinion swayed in common accord by truths undeniable. Such a system, so installed, would not —like the present system—quake and quiver at the inroads of truth; but like the Copernican astronomy, would become only more and more established as truth advanced. Based upon truth, it would be stability itself.

How foolish is it not then to advocate violent or sudden revolution, when, to maintain stability amid the present hodge-podge of popular opinions, it would only necessitate dictatorship—a threat, rather than a guarantee of service, to the general welfare?

Evidently, Mr. Browder, the race is purely between *education* and catastrophe. And we are fighting most strategically when we educate first ourselves and then the masses. You are doing your part in meeting the propaganda from the Right; and, as to this phase of your work, I can only give you my highest commendation.

Minneapolis. OSCAR E. JOHNSON.

Comment: This letter deals with two questions. First, what assurance is there that the Communist leaders will not betray the working class? The answer to this is, *the assurance of an organized party* with a revolutionary program. Without this Party there would be, of course, no assurance. The old Second International leaders could betray, because they had first corrupted the program of the Party; after that came the corruption of the leading individuals of the Party generally. The Communist

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Party has demonstrated, is demonstrating, its ability to defeat and throw off all attempts to corrupt its program. That is the significance of the existence of many little sects of renegades from Communism; if the Party was politically unhealthy, those poisonous groups would still be in its ranks. The ability of the Party to throw them off quickly and almost painlessly is the sign of its political health.

Our correspondent reads history, evidently, without the assistance of Marx, if he really finds the cause for continued oppression, "in spite of all the successful revolutions of the past," is the ethical weaknesses of leaders. Past revolutions (that is, before the Russian revolution), did nothing to abolish the basis of class divisions; necessarily, therefore, they could not abolish oppression even though all the leaders had been purest saints. The Russian revolution, even though not made by saints but only by a Party of honest revolutionists, *did* lift the people from oppression and the blight of exploitation; that is because its program of action struck at the roots of class division, by abolishing private property in the means of production. Is there any one in the world today still repeating that old exploded canard that in the Soviet Union the leaders "live on the fat of the land while the masses remain economically insecure"? Only Hearst, and a few of his paid agents! No, all the best ethics in the world will accomplish nothing without the correct program; given that program and a Party to carry it out, the necessary ethics are hammered out and developed in the course of struggle.

The second point of our correspondent is his placing of "an educational revolution" as the pre-condition for any economical and political revolutions. But this order for the course of social change is standing reality on its head. How can an educational revolution take place while the economic system on which education rests is that of capitalist private property? Obviously, it cannot take place. And how can an economic revolution take place, while the political power is still in the hands of those who profit from the present economic system? Obviously, it cannot take place. The passing of political power into the hands of the working class is the necessary pre-condition for any economic or cultural revolution. Any other approach means to abandon science and go over to utopian or religious fantasies.

Like most people still under the influence of philosophic idealism, our correspondent seems to think the question of violence in the class struggle is a matter of choice, or of "advocacy." Communists do not advocate violence. That would be stupid and we are not stupid, whatever else we may be. But we recognize that it is inevitable and we, therefore, do not waste our time and energy weeping about it and "advocating" against it. Instead we call upon all who suffer from capitalist violence to organize themselves for effective defense against it. We tell the masses to have no illusions that they can find a way out of the crisis which avoids such a decision as that made in a previous crisis by the Declaration of Independence. This issue is not raised simply by the Communist program; it existed in all previous revolutions. It is a part of all basic historical changes. To think to avoid it by refraining from "advocating" it, is merely to imitate the traditional ostrich, which according to the fable hides his head in the sand and thinks thereby he has concealed himself from his enemy.

"The sheer weight of popular opinion" never did and never will "establish" anything. Historical changes come out of class struggles, from classes organized and fighting for particular programs. When the fight has been decided in favor of one side, "popular opinion" then crystallizes around the new institutions that are set up. To those who can see only the new institutions and newly crystallizing "popular opinion," it may look as if the first arise automatically as a result of the second; but that is a mere optical illusion. The new institutions are the cause and "popular opinion" is the effect; in its turn the new institutions must have a cause, but that is found in the victory of a new class in a life-and-death struggle with the old. Our correspondent has evidently not studied as yet the most elementary lessons of Karl Marx. We publish his letter as a typical expression of the futility of reasoning from such foundations.

West Coast Labor on the March

DAWN LOVELACE

PORTLAND, ORE.

FOR one born and reared to the call of a sawmill whistle, whose early memories are a confusion of the fragrance of fresh-cut lumber, of saw-dust flecks clinging to overalls and of half articulate mutterings against the indignities inflicted by the boss, the strike of 40,000 sawmill and timber workers releases a gulp of satisfaction long awaited. Experiences forgotten and buried by more recent experience stir and crop to the surface of your mind, giving a tang to the headlines that jitter and whine, bluster and snarl the fears and hatred of the "lumber barons." Sawmills silenced and numbed by walkouts, with pickets pacing before the gates that have sucked in the hours of millhands, where machinery and lumber piles grind and batter human beings into weary, dejected shapelessness and spew them out in the evening at the hoot of the whistle—remembering, your eyes look long at the silent yards and you strain something like a chuckle and a curse through your teeth. Remembering, you know that this has been coming for years. You know that this strike was not created in a day—a week—or a month. You know—with a crazy exultation—that into its fabric are woven the post-war wage-cuts, the lying and bally-hooing, the flag-waving and strutting of well-fed 4L organizers and spokesmen who talked with a precise, academic accent and whose hands never felt the splinters of timber.

Your own memories, you realize, are like the thoughts that have been pounding in the brains of the men in the logging camps and mills as they have been moving together—turning their backs on the blatant Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen and organizing in a union of their own choosing. In their laughter—in the expressions on their faces—you can see something of that combined exultation and bitterness distilling and ripening through the years and flaring to action-impelling consciousness with the demand for wage increases; for shorter hours and for union recognition. Union recognition . . . behind the phrase crowds the history of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen and the years when so many loggers and millhands secretly carried a red card and fought for better conditions in the camps and mills—fought class-consciously and tenaciously—only to have the Loyal Legion of straw-bosses and yes-men tell how they raised the wage-standards of workers in the lumber industry.

Even now—during the past few weeks when logging boots have caught the rhythm of unity and militancy—the 4L has been busy with conferences—little gatherings of foremen and employers conferring and making decisions for labor. They have been higgling over pennies—over whether or not the hourly minimum should be raised a cent or two with all the apparently complacent, smug unawareness of the gathering strike storm that the Adjutant General's headquarters felt toward the Argonne. The press statements and reports resulting from these conferences have struck a hollow, unreal note in the growing tension, just as 4L flag-waving and Hun-hunting was a sham and crude slander and libel against loggers and lumbermen during the War.

For one who remembers the sound of mill whistles—whose childhood pours out memories of a sawmill town or of several sawmill towns—the immediate issues have roots that reach back and back, drawing nourishment and significance out of the past. And you know that thousands—seventy-five or a hundred thousand sawmill and timber workers walking out of the mills and camps are remembering, too, more vividly, more sharply. You can laugh at the hysterical desperation of the operators and owners during the recent weeks since the strike started seething.

At one camp they tried to raise a forbidding hand against the whirl-wind and fired fifty union workers. That camp was the first to go out—and within a few days the whole Clark and Wilson mechanism—the camp and two sawmills—were shut down, the first volley in the war to come. Every sawmill, every harbor has humbled and roared with speed-up as operators scurried to fill the orders that came pouring in. The scurry—the piles of fresh lumber in the mill yards; the hooting and snorting of lumber freighters as propellers impatiently churned the waters moving cargo to fill orders that kept coming in—all of this gave the lie to the whinnying announcements that there would be no general lumber strike and if the workers were dumb enough—the owners would be grateful. Lumber barons watching orders pile up in a mad dash to beat May 6, the walkout date, lashed operations with panicky desperation and issued jubilant statements that decreased in jubilancy

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as the deadline approached and orders still remained to be filled.

"Let 'em strike! We'll be glad of the chance to shut down!" But the cheap heroics of the profit-greedy couldn't convince even themselves. Only the bewildered conservatives of the A.F. of L. leadership—the Abe Muirs who trust in arbitration and peaceful negotiations—responded to the shoddy heroics of the barons.

In Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California and Montana the sawmill and timber workers are turning deaf ears to the blustering.

This knowledge—these fragments of information—merge and fuse with incidents of experience as I return to visit a typical sawmill town that I lived in during the war. Of course I was a knock-kneed youngster then, and a wage-cut was only a puzzled wonder about the worried look on Dad's face and a sullen anger because he snapped at my request for more Red Cross donation money. I remember those flashes of bitterness at the end of the war when wages were zooming downward and leaving living costs dangling above the heads and reach of the workers.

"They got my donation out of last week's pay-check! Don't care if other kids is buyin' Red Cross buttons—we can't afford it."

To the left of the highway, looking snobbishly down on the mills and company houses, stand the homes of the "better class," graded lawns and well-spaced shrubbery testifying to the bank-accounts and "culture" of the owners. On the right the land falls away sharply toward the river, and strung along the waterfront are the sawmills, oil docks and the drab, monotonous rows of company houses, each one a dreary replica of its neighbor, each one stripped and denuded of everything except the barest essentials of a home. A timid flash of color in a pot of geraniums, perhaps, only intensifies the pitiful barrenness of the rest. Along the highway business houses have established themselves—a couple of stores, the post-office, with a church poking its steeple out of the middle.

The gray, weather-beaten sheds of an abandoned shipyard sprawl like the dejected ghosts of an era of gaudy flags and crazy-painted hulls lurching into the water to the tune of blaring whistles. A huddle of oil-tanks squat together and a picket paces before the gates to the oil company property, warning that the tanker seamen are on strike. A tent at the side of the highway forms the shelter for a group of pickets on duty, and gives the scene a martial atmosphere.

The company houses stand between the highway and the mills — each formation of bare shiplap enclosing two or three rooms rented to the workers at exorbitant rents. The companies even squeeze a portion of profit from the electricity and water supplied to the company rows — the drab, dismal "poverty rows" cramped together in an economy of space that mocks the tradition of roominess in the West.

Such is the physical pattern of a Western sawmill town—a pattern repeated with variations throughout the region. Here the Lumber Kings—the great aristocracy of Capital—rule by a divine right of ownership. Here—and memory rushes in a torrent—the wife of the big-shot used to preside as superintendent of the Sunday School, where all the children of the mill workers were taught how blessed are the meek and how Jesus suffers and is hurt by people who become radicals. That, too, must be a part of the strike—some of the pigmentation that colors the grimness of the strikers.

It's funny — but I can't remember which owner it was, whether Clark or Wilson of the Clark and Wilson royal family. But it doesn't matter. They lived in a big house on the hill, and we passed it going back and forth to school. In the spring there were clumps of daffodils in the yard, and to millhands' kids daffodils were something to think about wistfully. And one evening after school three of us, acting on some kind of impulse, violated the law of private property and picked some of the daffodils. We didn't sneak. We didn't scamper. We walked boldly along the front walk, stepped over the lawn, and picked an intoxicating handful of the yellow flowers. The incident is shadowy and vague—so that I don't remember what we said as we committed that sin of covetousness. It must have been an expression of defiance. Anyway, as we completed our trespassing and started away, the Lumber Baron—Mr. Clark or Mr. Wilson—came around the corner of the house, his face blazing with wrath. I remember he had one arm—and he was a kind of legend of self-made success. From millhand to Lumber Baron the legend had it. I remember, too, that there was more awe in that empty sleeve than in the way he bellowed at us—told us to get th' hell off his lawn and put those flowers down right now, and didn't we know that was stealing?

Then there was the day the one-armed Baron died. It was during the flu epidemic —or just afterwards. They had a big funeral at his home, dismissed school for the day of the funeral and let all of the kids of the millhands march primly to pay homage to the memory of Greatness. His widow—who went right on supervising the town's only Sunday School—looked very dignified in her sorrow, and beamed tenderly on the rows of schoolchildren who sat stiffly throughout the services. We were marshalled into a line and led past the coffin, and I remember that some of the kids sniffled and I wondered if I should sniffle, too. But somehow I was unable to muster a single sniffle for the man who had bellowed at us for picking a handful of his hundreds of daffodils.

Well — the Clark and Wilson camp and mills were the first to go out in the battle of labor in the woods and sawmills. I wonder if there is something incongruously petty and personal about my satisfaction in that. . . . And I wonder if those other kids have fathers or brothers on strike now.

Another incident hammers through the covering of forgetfulness as I look into a quiet millyard, where piles of lumber stand futilely waiting to be moved. It was during the war for Democracy, when college professors—performing as 4L organizers and speakers—were beating the woods for slackers and radicals. It was some kind of meeting—a patriotic peprally for sawmill workers, and dad took me to hear the speeches. We went with a neighbor who openly and defiantly declared his membership in the I.W.W.

I paid little attention to most of the meeting until the speaker—a very fine gentleman who would probably have cursed gently if he got pitch on his hands — exclaimed acidly: "What if they are piling up money? You're getting your bit out of it, aren't you?"

I was old enough to know what that meant —and to understand the meaning behind the profanity that fell from the mouths of some of the men. That profanity had a clean sound in the midst of the murky patriotism. It was clean and honest—sharp and incisive like the will to strike now roaring through the timbers.

"Nothing doing! If he ain't a citizen he can't join!" *Crockett Johnson*

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Murder in Manhattan

A Short Story

A. B. SHIFFRIN

A FEW women of the neighborhood, old customers most of them, walked up and down all day in front of Kirshenbaum's Kosher Butcher Shop. On the broad window the local sign maker had painted the head of a cow with big dumb eyes, and the full portrait of a skinny chicken. The same sign maker had printed the cardboard signs that the marching women now carried in front of the butcher store.

The women were picketing. They were fighting against the high price of meat. They weren't quite sure why the prices were higher, but they were sure that something was wrong. They were cooks, all of them. They knew their kitchens and they knew the appetites of their husbands and children. And they knew the limits of their pocketbooks. Somewhere there was a conspiracy to deprive them of every spare penny they owned. Well, they were not going to stand for it. They would fight. They would strike against the masters of meat. They would protest. They wouldn't eat the stuff, not until the prices came down.

The women worked in three shifts. If a housewife without any sense of responsibility to her neighbors dared to come near the butcher store with a market basket, she was promptly halted by the pickets. She was spoken to—gently. Or she was scolded by high-pitched voices. Or she was greeted with rich and terrible curses. It depended on how much resistance she put up against the friendly pleadings of the women pickets.

"Lousy scab," she was called.

"You should choke to death with the first bite you take, you good for nothing baggage."

"A black year on you."

"And on your whole family."

There was one bold lady who slipped through the pickets and entered Kirshenbaum's place. She was a Mrs. Rubin whose husband owned a candy store and whose son was studying to be an engineer. Mrs. Goldberg, one of the pickets, watched her from the doorway and saw that she bought two pounds of steak, a pound of liver and a pound of lamb chops. Then Mrs. Rubin came out.

"So you're going to break our strike, are you?" asked Mrs. Goldberg, making a grab for the meat.

"You ought to be ashamed," said Mrs. Finkel, "a woman like you, with a son in college."

Mrs. Finkel stole up behind her.

"Women like you," said Mrs. Cohen, the third picket, "should only walk on crutches. If you ever have a daughter-in-law, she should never have children."

Mrs. Finkel made a sudden lunge from behind and had the bag of meat in her hands before the dazed Mrs. Rubin knew what had happened. There was a shout of laughter from the heads sticking out of the tenement windows on both sides of the street and the humiliated Mrs. Rubin ran off like a woman caught red handed with her lover. Three stray dogs had a feast of fresh kosher meat right in front of the butcher store while the butcher, Mr. Kirshenbaum, looked on in anger.

He stood inside, behind the marble counter, with a white blood-stained apron. He always smelled of slaughtered animals. He was a fat man with hanging chins, like Taft's, and no hair on his head, like Farley, and a loose overflowing stomach, like an elephant's. To show that he was not afraid of the women he came from behind the counter and stood in the doorway of the store. His front protruded like an extension. He forgot to leave the long sharp butcher knife inside. He had it with him, swinging it carelessly like a pirate. He was angry. He was losing business. He was not quite sure what he ought to do.

"Mr. Kirshenbaum," called a woman from a window just over his head.

He leaned out and looked up. The woman spat in his face. It was a direct hit and the watchers in the windows on both sides of the street roared with pleasure.

The butcher was wild. He ran out on the sidewalk. He waved a furious fist at the woman on the first floor and this only excited her salivary glands to further activity. In his anger Mr. Kirshenbaum gave one of the pickets a shove with his big body.

"You should drop dead," she said. "What are you pushing for?"

A dozen voices swore at him. The sweat stood out on his soft round face. His jaws moved. Then he snorted, "I'll show you," and walked menacingly into his shop. The women saw him pick up the telephone. He talked into it with great excitement.

When he was finished he came up to the front, but not in the doorway this time. He stood on the safe side of the window. He looked out. His face shone with satisfaction. He would fix them, those women!

The afternoon was passing. Soon the street became quiet. The women had to go back to their flats to prepare vegetarian meals for their husbands coming home from jobs, or from job hunting. The children, tired of playing ball in the gutters, were at home, waiting to eat.

Now in the late afternoon when the sun was beginning to go down and a coolness sweetened the air only a single woman paced the path in front of Kirshenbaum's butcher store. She was a young woman. She had no children. She was married only eight months. But it was easy to see that she would not be childless very much longer. Her husband worked in a paper box factory and during the meat strike he would call for his wife on his way home, and they would walk away together. They were a happy couple. Everyone liked them. When they got home he helped her make supper, and later he helped her with the dishes.

When Kirshenbaum saw that she was parading outside alone he came out to talk to her. He liked the young woman. He had known her all his life, even when she was just a school girl. He had sold chicken and meat to her mother, who was now dead. When the girl was married he sent three whole chickens for the wedding feast.

"Mrs. Raskin," he began.

"Don't talk to me," she said.

"Take my advice, Mrs. Raskin," he went on in a low friendly tone, "and go home. There's going to be trouble."

"So what? What have I got to be afraid of?"

"I'm telling you for your own good."

He was about to say more but just then a big green car shot from around the corner and stopped with a great noise right in front of the butcher store. Mr. Kirshenbaum turned pale, grunted, and walked inside in a hurry. Two tough looking men stepped out of the car and looked up and down the street like surveyors. One of the men went inside to talk to the butcher. The second stranger approached Mrs. Raskin.

"Lady," he said politely, "get the hell out of here if you know what's good for you."

Mrs. Raskin's face was white but she stood her ground. She had an idea who the men were and why they had come. She had heard stories.

"You go away from me," she said.

"It ain't healthy around here," the man said, "so scram. And if we ever ketch you around here again you'll have every bone in your body broken."

"Look at him!" said Mrs. Raskin. "Where do you think you are? In Pennsylvania? In Harlem?"

"Wise guy, aintcha?" said the man. "If you don't like it around here why in hell don't you go back to Russia where—"

"In the first place," said Mrs. Raskin, "because I came from Poland. And in the second place because I am an American citizen and have as much right to stay here as you have. So how do you like that?"

"To hell with all that," said the man. "Now get going."

"I'll stay right where I am."

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"Maybe!"

He came close to her, scowling. Mrs. Raskin was nervous. There were not many people in the street. Behind the man, through the window, she could see Kirshenbaum and the other man in deep conversation. Her lips tightened. She did not move an inch.

"Young man," she said, "if you don't stop bothering me I'll call a policeman and have you arrested."

The man laughed.

There wasn't a policeman in sight.

"Is that so?" he said. "You'll call a policeman. Dear me!"

He grinned broadly. Then he became serious.

"Lady, I'm tired of talking with you. Now you beat it right away, or else—!"

He gave Mrs. Raskin a push. Mrs. Raskin promptly slapped his face.

"You bitch!" he said, and he grabbed her by the hand.

She kicked him.

"Let me go!" she cried.

He took hold of the cardboard sign that hung by a string from her neck, tore at it roughly and flung it to the sidewalk. Now a few heads began to appear in the tenement windows.

"Look! He's hitting Mrs. Raskin."

"Mrs. Raskin, Mrs. Raskin, don't let him hit you."

"Hey, you big bum, why don't you leave her alone."

"Call a cop, somebody, it's Kirshenbaum's gangsters."

"You big gorilla, a plague on you!"

The man gripped Mrs. Raskin's arm and twisted it. She groaned with pain.

"How do you like that?" he said.

She spat at him. He twisted harder. She kicked him in the shins. He twisted harder. She screamed with pain. A small crowd, a frightened muttering crowd, was soon around them.

The man who was talking with Kirshenbaum now came out and pushed his way over to the side of his partner.

"What's going on here!" he said. "Beat it, all of you. What the hell's the matter with you, Frankie, can't you handle one dame without starting a riot?"

"Try it yourself, wise guy," said Frankie. "The bitch kicked me."

"What the hell's the matter, lady. Do you want to get yourself hurt?"

He had a cigar in his mouth and it stuck from his lips like a poisonous plant growing there, nourished at the roots by the rich saliva of his big mouth.

Mrs. Raskin was so angry and hurt that she could not talk back. Tears filled her eyes.

"Look! . . . There comes Mr. Raskin," some one in the crowd cried out.

The woman heard. She shouted his name.

Mr. Raskin, coming home from work, pale, tired, hungry, rushed up.

There was a startled look on his face.

"What's the matter here?" he asked.

He was a small man with a persecuted air about him. He wore shell-rimmed glasses. He saw his wife and a man holding her by the arm. It puzzled and frightened him. Such a thing had never happened in his life. And the crowd of people staring at him, watching him, waiting for him to do something.

"Tillie," he asked anxiously. "What's the matter? You, hey, what are you doing? You're hurting her. Leave her go! Tillie!"

The man released her. Mrs. Raskin gave him a quick slap in the face.

"Take that," she said, "you dirty gangster."

The man said, "Oh, yeah!" and made another grab for her, but this time Mr. Raskin interfered.

"You leave her alone," he said hoarsely.

The man with the cigar in his mouth watched and said nothing. Frankie, the other one, looked at Raskin.

"Wise guy," he said. "Beat it, shrimp, before I beat the hell out of you. Beat it, I say."

He gave Raskin a push. Raskin did not like the looks of things. He had come home tired and hungry. He had planned to take Tillie home, have supper and go to a moving picture.

"Somebody call a cop," said a woman.

There wasn't a cop in sight.

"You cossack!" cried Mrs. Raskin. "Who called for you anyway? Why don't you leave us alone?"

"Who's a cossack?" said Frankie, and he gave her a shove.

Raskin could not bear to see his wife shoved around. He didn't mind if they did it to him. But his wife! And right before his own eyes. It was shameful. People would laugh at him later. He grew red in the face and without knowing what he was doing he flung a bony fist at Frankie. Without a word the man with the cigar who had done nothing so far punched Raskin right in the chest, a short heavy punch. Raskin shook like a tree and coughed to catch his breath. Then the man hit him a hard blow in the mouth. Mrs. Raskin screamed in terror, seeing her husband beaten. Blood came from his mouth. The crowd began to shout. From every window on the block heads stuck out. When Mrs. Raskin saw blood trickling from her husband's mouth she went crazy. She flew like a wild bird at the man who had struck him. She scratched his face. She tore the cigar from his lips. When the cigar dropped the man looked like some some one else, a different face. He uttered a foul word and punched her in the stomach. Mrs. Raskin fell to the ground. Two frightened women picked her up and dragged her into the butcher shop. Kirshenbaum was hiding behind the counter.

Outside Raskin was fighting a foolish battle against the two thugs. His glasses had fallen to the ground. Two thin red lines ran from his ears to his eyes where the temples had left their marks. His eyes were strange without the glasses in front of them. A thin line of blood came from his mouth. A fist struck him in the face and he fell, a pathetic heap, to the sidewalk. His head struck the iron cellar door in front of Kirshenbaum's window.

He lay still.

A cry of horror rose from the crowd. With one impulse, too long delayed, they rushed upon the two men. The one who had lost his cigar drew a revolver.

"I'll shoot the first bastard that comes near me," he said.

Men and women, and a few children, fell back in fright. The thugs worked their way to the car. They got in, slammed the door, started the motor, and drove off in a great rush. A few people ran after them. But it was no use.

"My God," said a woman who had dropped to her knees near the fallen figure of Raskin, "My God, Raskin is dead."

A brick crashed against Kirshenbaums' window and the glass came down like a hail storm. Kirshenbaum rushed out. He looked at the ruined window and raised a fat arm in anger.

"Who done that?" he cried. "Who done that?"

Then he saw at his feet the motionless body of Raskin.

"My God!" he said.

Voices attacked him, loud, threatening, hoarse, wild.

"You called the gangsters, Kirshenbaum, you, you, you!"

He shouted back a denial.

"Honest to God, I didn't."

"You should live so!"

"May you be poisoned by your own meat, you murderer!"

"Murderer!"

"It was you!"

"You!"

"Somebody call an ambulance. What are you standing and waiting for?"

"You killed Raskin."

"Call the police."

"Kirshenbaum, you crook, you blood sucker, you seller of foul meat, for a dollar you killed a good man. You murdered Dave Raskin. You. You and your gangsters. We won't forget it, Kirshenbaum, we won't forget it. Our day of reckoning is coming."

Raskin's body lay in front of the butcher store. He had almost crushed his glasses when he tumbled to the ground. His eyes would not need them any more. A white cardboard covered with footprints stuck out from under his head. It was like a half buried tombstone with faded lettering. It was the sign his wife had carried. A few of the words could still be read: DON'T BUY MEAT UNTIL. . . .

A man in the drugstore called for an ambulance. Before the ambulance arrived a policeman sauntered over to Kirshenbaum's butcher store where the crowd was still standing and talking excitedly.

"What's going on here?" he asked.

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Carl Fox

Youth Leaves School

MARTHA THOMAS

"AN HONEST Commencement Address," ran the caption above a cartoon in some paper or other not long ago. It showed a stout, oldish gentleman in cap and gown, advising the graduation class as follows: "You are going out into a very complicated world. You won't know what it's all about. But never mind; none of us knows what it's all about either!" And another cartoon, clipped from the Chicago Daily News of June 6, portrays a youth begging the university president, who is signing diplomas, "Make mine read boondoggling and maybe I can get a job." The caption—"With An Eye To Work Relief."

It is true that we do not yet face a revolutionary situation in the United States. But one of the prerequisites for such a situation is failing confidence of the ruling class in its own ability to solve its problems. Driftwood such as the above shows which way the tide is turning.

The Chicago high schools last week graduated 12,271 boys and girls. The outlook for these young citizens is correctly and candidly summed up in the cartoons just quoted. They may, if their parents have money, stay in school for awhile before braving the world whose present rulers don't know what it's all about. Otherwise they are doomed to a dreary apprenticeship at job-hunting, knowing in advance that there are no jobs. The alternative, of course, is revolt, and a little hard thinking.

Less than two months ago, in anticipation of the annual graduation crisis, Chicago celebrated "Youth Week." The business men in charge were not as honest as the cartoonists, who went into action later. They talked—always for publication—about the "second annual rule of youth," and particularly about three vocational conferences at Calumet Park, to which all the young people of several South Side high schools were invited, "to hear a discussion on job-finding by leaders in various professions and businesses." The stated purpose was "to meet definite problems confronting high school graduates in search of employment." The notice of these conferences was sandwiched in between a marionette show and a kite-flying contest, the general aims of Youth Week being: "To encourage early cultivation of sound habits of health, appreciation of arts, cultivation of hobbies as a means of self-expression, to help youth in the problem of religion and to encourage devotion to the public good." In other words, to amuse and distract the thousands of jobless young workers, and, if possible, to prevent them from joining the Young Communist League.

I knew that 9 percent of Chicago's relief "clients" able to work had never had a job, as compared with 7 percent for the country as a whole, and that an additional 5 percent had less than 6 months' working experience before going on the relief rolls. It seemed worth while, under the circumstances, to hear what the city's self-styled leaders had to offer..

Calumet Park is located at 98th Street and Lake Michigan, on the edge of the South Chicago steel district, and about a mile from the nearest car line. The streets were surprisingly quiet, almost empty. At the second corner I met three youths, teasing a gay march tune out of their kazoos. Under the corner light, as we passed, their faces looked thin and anxious. But they were not headed for the vocational conference. The assembly hall at the park field house was brightly lighted, but no buzz, no hilarity, issued forth. I decided it must be late, and tiptoed to the entrance. Expecting on overflow audience, I blinked unbelievingly. Four boys chatted together in the second row. Two others sat silently, farther back, and five youngsters kidded each other and a girl in a rear corner. In the front row were two men, while on the stage a middle-aged woman played the piano, very softly. I slipped into a seat and meditated. More men arrived, and a few boys.

After some time the meeting opened, with seven speakers and an audience of fourteen. Others drifted in until there were twenty-nine in all. The park director introduced Mr. Henry P. Chandler, "president of the Chicago Youth Week Federation, former president of the Union League Club, and a distinguished lawyer." ("No!" protested the modest Mr. Chandler.) Taking over the meeting, he explained that it was merely an experiment. "Everybody move up front," he urged. "We're going to try to be very free and easy." It was an unfortunate beginning. The hall seemed larger and emptier than before.

Rapidly Mr. Chandler introduced the other business men present. "Now we're here to help you young men in any way we can," he announced. "How many of you are still in school?" About half raised their hands obediently. "How many are employed?" No

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one stirred. "How many want a job?" All hands were in the air.

"Well," said Mr. Chandler, "my advice to you young people is to stay in school. If you can find any way to better prepare yourself, so as to be ready for a job when it comes along—take it. It is better to keep active in times like these. Then, too, we should all try to find work we like to do—not that in which we can earn the most money. The satisfaction of enjoying your work is more important than money . . . Now, let's see, probably the best way to go about this is to find out what the young men here are most interested in. Then we can break up in groups. Each of these gentlemen will be glad to talk with you about his specialty . . . Here is Mr. Valentine, a merchant—you all know what a merchant is. Now, who is interested in salesmanship?" There was no response.

To the embarrassment of Messrs. Chandler and Valentine, it turned out that the majority wanted to know about electricity. They ranged themselves along the wall with two executives from the Commonwealth Edison Company, one interested in advertising, the other in lighting sales. Four gathered with the local journalist from The Calumet News, very affable. Then a boy's voice addressed Mr. Chandler. "How about politics? You talk about that, don't you? You're a lawyer." Clearly startled, the president of Youth Week consented to lead a handful in discussion of this perilous field. The rest of us, having expressed no preference, stayed where we were for a general discussion.

MR. CHRISTIANSON, a local real estate man, led off. He pointed out that to succeed in selling real estate you need a good head and also good legs—the latter being possibly of first importance. He himself began work in a real estate office. All offices need boys, to put up posters, etc. Any young man who is willing to work and who has imagination can succeed. The imagination is needed in these days to enable one to believe that there will again be a ready market for real estate. "I believe there is going to be," said Mr. Christianson staunchly. "People must have homes." He beamed at the circle of silent male youth about him.

A boy seated to the left of the speaker stared gloomily straight ahead. He was long-legged and sturdy, with a determined-looking thatch of reddish hair. Unexpectedly, while Mr. Christianson was still beaming, he spoke. "We realize the importance of real estate," he said. There was a quality in his voice that commanded attention. "As you say, people must have homes. But before you can buy real estate you must have money. The basic thing is to provide jobs for the 22 million who are on relief. . . ."

Mr. Christianson rashly interrupted him. "The papers say the banks are full of money."

"The main point is that 8 percent of the people control 85 percent of the wealth," the red-head shot back at him. "I don't think the future is so bright . . . with 30,000 new millionaires since. . . ."

The chairman deftly intervened. "We are fortunate," he said, "in having with us also Mr. Jackson of the Columbia Mills. They produce textiles, especially window shades. I suppose none of you has had the opportunity before of meeting the owner of a large factory."

Mr. Jackson, tall and suave, without further encouragement laid before the assemblage his philosophy of life and human labor. "I'm sure all of you have the ambition," he said, "to get out in front—out of the ranks. This is the day of specialists. The man who steps out in front today does so because of his ability to lead men—and, in manufacturing, to change the design of products, etc. It's the thinking man who finds himself out in front. . . . Contrary to the general impression, I believe there is plenty of room for the well-trained man in industry today. . . . Our plant," he added as an afterthought, "is not operating at its full capacity—not by any means. But the outlook is heartening."

Mr. Valentine cut in. "If I were a young man today I'd go to Marshall Field's or Carson Pirie's or anywhere they employ people and put in my application and I'd make it clear that *wages didn't matter.* I'd work for 50 cents a day, even. And don't begrudge the man ahead of you his job. Don't try to pull the big man down. Pull yourself up to his level."

Chairman: "You mean, Mr. Valentine, you'd get in there and work so hard that they couldn't get along without you. Then, when you threatened to go to some other firm, they'd raise your wages?" Mr. Valentine nodded.

A boy looked up suddenly and said: "It's pretty hard to be that man."

Mr. Jackson of the Columbia Mills took up the thread. "It's not necessary to threaten to leave to get that raise," he said, smiling. "*We* have bi-weekly meetings of our supervisory council, at which the outstanding people are discussed. We have opportunities to move the more promising people along, *and of course their rates change.* We get to know our men quite well—*much better than the average worker has any idea.*" He allowed his gaze to travel slowly about the circle while that remark sank in. "We have a training course, too," he went on. "If any of you want to know about the cost, it's somewhere about $1,000 a year. But don't let that figure scare you. We have several forms of assistance—scholarships, etc. Boys who earn part of their expenses during training find it *quite* an aid in securing employment. Men like to get hold of someone who's able to help himself. And high school is not necessary. . . ."

Chairman: "It seems to me the Columbia Mills would be a good place to work. We hear people say that you can't get a job unless you know somebody higher up. Now that isn't true at your mills, is it, Mr. Jackson?"

Mr. Jackson: "No; nor at several other neighborhood plants — the Great Lakes Forge Company, for example. I am in touch with their set-up and they know a great deal about their people, and are looking for those *with the right attitude.* It's always possible for the right man to get ahead."

Again the voice from the left: "What disposition are you going to make of the rank and file who don't get ahead?"

"What?" asked Mr. Jackson blankly.

"I said," repeated the red-headed youth, "what disposition are you going to make of the rank and file who *don't get ahead?*"

"Why don't they get ahead?" It was Mr. Jackson's turn to question. "How do those get ahead who do?"

"By using their integrity to exploit others."

"You mean to exploit other men?"

"Yes!" The boy's eyes held Mr. Jackson's and caused him to move restlessly.

"Now—that's a little off the point, anyway," fluttered the chairman. "We have here Mr. Timbers, of the Illinois Central Railroad. Mr. Timbers. . . ."

Mr. Timbers, young and oozing success, leaned forward in his seat and launched into a romantic story of transportation The circle really listened for the first time. A few boys from the conferences on the side lines came over to hear him.

"When I think of railroads," said Mr. Timbers, "I always remember that Chicago could never have existed—there could have been no great cities—without transportation. The Illinois Central has 9,000 miles of tracks, through fourteen states. Our heavy-duty shops at Paducah, Kentucky, are considered the finest railroad shops in the world. If we have a new terminal here—and we will have some day when all these difficulties are ironed out—it will no doubt be designed by our own architects. . . . We have our own hospital system and complete medical department. Of course all our employes receive medical attention at no cost—in return for a small medical fee they pay—very small—$1.20 a month. And we have our own legal staff. . . . Also, the traffic department is assuming even more importance nowadays. A few years ago our main effort was to get the business over the rails. Today, with all the competition, it's equally important to *get the business.* You really have to know something about the businesses of all your customers. We take a group of men and put them through a year's training in every phase of traffic work." The youths before him, in their torn sweaters and old pants, leaned forward eagerly. With perhaps a single exception, they were ready to file their applications with Mr. Timbers.

"But a college degree is required," went on Mr. Timbers. "We wouldn't even consider a man without it." The boys sat back. A low buzz of ironic comment arose. "The reason is, we're going to demand an awful lot of those fellows. They are paid a salary while they take the course. But that col-

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lege degree doesn't need to discourage you. You know about it now and you're young enough so that if you should be interested in traffic work you can go ahead and get the education."

ONE girl had joined the twenty-eight males soon after the meeting opened. As it broke up, she turned to me. "I thought this was for girls as well as boys," she said. "Are you walking to the streetcar?"

As we left, I was still wondering where the youth of the South Side could be. Outside the door of the field house we found them, gathered in knots, talking in low tones and reading a leaflet, sharply white in the glare of the flood lights. They knew from experience that the park program within had nothing of serious importance to offer them.

My companion was shocked. . . . Or did she only pretend to be? "The Communists," she said instantly. "But you wouldn't think they'd dare to distribute those right here, where all the people are."

"Why not?" I inquired. "It seems to me a good place. Let's get one too."

She gave me a sidelong glance as we walked on, reading our leaflets.

"FIGHT FOR A FUTURE!" they advised us. "The true American tradition urges militancy."

Young Men and Women of Chicago:

The week of April 22-29 has been dedicated to us with the aim that we may center attention on the solution of our acute problems. What are these problems?

For six years we have borne the brunt of the economic crisis. No jobs. . . . The tuberculosis rate among young people higher than ever before. . . . Malnutrition. . . . .Young men driven into crime . . . young women into prostitution.

What does the government offer? The most rapid mobilization for war! The largest peacetime budget in history, for the army and navy. . . . Enlarged C.C.C. camps. (War for what—for whom?). . . . Fake security plans. . . . Strike-breaking. . . .

Only militant unity can win our demands. . . . DEMONSTRATE MAY 1. . . . Join the Young Communist League!

"Well," broke out the girl at my side. "People will have to do something. What kind of advice did those men offer? 'Stay in school—or take a job and slave for nothing—or give us your labor as an apprentice and get the so-called training we offer! Climb up on the necks of your fellow-workers! Show the "right attitude" and watch your step. Above all, stand in with the boss!' And they had no answer at all to the sensible questions that red-headed kid asked. . . . Where does this May Day parade start from? I'm sure going to be there!"

The voice of reason . . . the voice of youth. It drowned out all the drivel of a long evening. I went home confident that the world will be better run one of these days, when the quiet girls and long-legged boys get around to taking it over from the incompetents now in charge.

Correspondence

Hearst in 1919

TO THE NEW MASSES:

William Randolph Hearst has a distinguished list of persons whom he has at one time or another labeled un-American. If you happen to disagree with Mr. Hearst's principles of economics or question an employer's right to slash wages or if you struggle for a classless, profitless society, Mr. Hearst is certain to damn you as a violator of Americanism. But history has its strange twists. In the March 18, 1919 issue of The New York Tribune, patriot Willie is himself attacked for being un-American not by the demoniacal Reds but by a returning corps of soldiers and their officers.

According to this report Mayor Hylan had appointed a committee to welcome the 304th Brigade of Heavy Tanks arriving from Marseilles. The committee included Hearst. While the ship carrying the home-coming troops was still at sea the soldiers were informed about this committee and its personnel. When the boat arrived in New York harbor the committee rode out on a police tug to meet it. The men aboard the troop ship, instead of shouting their appreciation, were surprisingly glum. The committee was puzzled, but not for long. A few hours before the five hundred soldiers had passed a resolution, which they handed to the delegation, censoring the mayor for appointing Hearst to the committee. The resolution read:

> We, the undersigned officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men register our unqualified disapproval of the designation of William Randolph Hearst as a member of a committee formed for the purpose of welcoming members of the American Expeditionary Force returning to the United States. Protest is registered because of the conviction that he has proved himself to be un-American, pro-German and inhumanitarian, and therefore totally unfit for membership on a committee of the above character.

Appended to this protest was another expression of indignation which the "doughboys" threw out to the tug as it came alongside their ship.

> With the cold storage air, the sanctified smile,
> That's him, the guy in the black stetson tile,
> The flag that we fought for at Terry Chateau,
> The flag that he hung on his paper to hide,
> The coils of the snake that was hissing inside.
> If he wants to shake hands you bet I'll decline,
> For the hand that shook Bernstorff's will never shake mine.
> A job in Berlin is more in his line.
>
> Yes, a job in Berlin—or Rome—is more in line.

JOHN STUART.

Three Hours' Sleep in a Week

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I have just completed a hitchhiking jaunt across the country—San Francisco to New York. Almost without exception the people who picked me up were workers: delivery boys, truck-drivers, salesmen and in one case a young mining engineer and his wife. To the average tourist with an empty back seat or rumble, a student with a suitcase standing by the roadside is about as significant as a rock or a tree.

I made over half the trip in trucks. The drivers invariably give a fellow a ride if they are sure they will not meet up with insurance company spotters. A driver for the Lang Petroleum Corp. took me half way across Nevada in this way. "I'll ride you till dawn," he said. "There's no spotters out tonight. But some nights they park out here in the desert and flash a spotlight on us. They watch us for smoking and for carrying riders." Drivers for this company earn $40 a round trip from Reno to Salt Lake. They get four or five hours sleep out of every forty-eight and work continuously. If they want any time off, they lose a haul.

A couple of truck-drivers I rode with had formerly been bus-drivers. From them I heard stories of grueling schedules, of sleeping in uniform. A man formerly a driver with the Burlington Route recalled working for three years with one day off—12-16 hours a day, seven days a week and a hundred dollars a month. For similar work Greyhound Lines pay $28 a week.

My last ride was with a trucker from Buffalo to New York City. In return for the ride my job was to "keep him awake." He had had *three hours sleep in the last week!* Though he owned his own truck and the conditions were self-imposed, he explained, he had no alternative at the moment if he wished to provide his family with a decent living. This man sounded the keynote of the life of a truck-driver when he remarked at one stop for coffee: "I'm crazy for sleep. But I can't let go of myself now—I'd just go all to pieces."

BARNSTON SMEATON.

From an Ex-D.A.R.

TO THE NEW MASSES:

To my amazement, on page 4 in THE NEW MASSES, I saw the photograph of the note written to Will Ghere, Manager of the Hollywood Theatre, by the fascists. He is the son of a very dear friend of mine. He was reared in Frankfort and his mother is now a school teacher in Chicago. He always comes to our home, when he comes to Frankfort.

We have been Socialists for over twenty-five years and voted the Communist ticket in the last two elections. Mr. S—— has been a student of economics while at his work in Chicago with the International Harvester Company and is now affiliated with the National Farmers' Union, helping to educate the forgotten men and women of agriculture. We are very much interested in Communism and believe it is the light and the hope of the world. We have been crucified in this community for our free thinking. Our daughter has been ostracized in the clubs of the city, all on account of her radical ideals, but we are true to the cause. I have resigned as a member of the D.A.R. because of their crucifixion of free thought in America.

MABEL C. S.

Frankfort, Ind.

The New Crusaders

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In a recent issue of THE NEW MASSES appeared an article "Between Wars on the Coast" which described the steps taken by Big Business to organize terror against the militant working class. In line with the information you published, The San Francisco News printed an article on June 10 telling of the organization of the Northern California unit of The Crusaders, formerly interested in the repeal of prohibition. The News stated:

> . . . Jerd Sullivan, Robert B. Coons and some of the younger citizenry began to feel the need of a group which could do a little new-broom work in civic affairs, somewhat after the fashion of the Cincinnatus organization in Seattle. They tried to get the Cincinnatus name and affiliation but the Seattle boys wouldn't allow enough autonomy.

The Cincinnatus, incidentally, is a political group operating in Seattle (now in the city council) and has distinguished itself as being viciously anti-labor. It is the god-father behind the scene of Seattle's "Committee of 500," a vigilante group which in paid advertisements has urged violence against labor unions and workers during strikes.

But to come back to the Crusaders. Their program is anti-radical, anti-New Deal and seeks "to destroy the power of the vicious and misguided malcontent." The organization committee is picked from

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the sons or relatives of powerful corporation executives—the Wells Fargo Bank, the Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, the Matson Navigation Company, brokers, corporation lawyers, officials in the Junior Chamber of Commerce, etc., etc. And the Crusaders are blessed by that foremost open-shop advocate, Wallace Alexander, director of the Honolulu Consolidated Oil Company, the Home Fire and Marine Insurance Company, the Matson Navigation Company and so on, and one of the leading spirits in the Industrial Association.

Just one more item. The New Crusaders are linked, according to very good authority, to the vigilante organization being formed in San Francisco and calling itself the "Committee of 1000." Wallace Alexander's name again crops up in relation to this terrorist committee. The Crusaders, backed by the Junior Chamber of Commerce, blessed by the "grown up" Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Association, definitely tied-up with the vigilantes, are ready to take a major part in attempting to crush the militant labor movement. Of course, the members won't do the dirty work themselves—they hire thugs and gangsters for that. But they have money and power, and they will spare nothing to wipe out the militants.

San Francisco, Calif. MARTIN KENT.

Letters in Brief

We have a letter from a group of writers working together to help Maxwell Bodenheim, poet and novelist, who is destitute and ill. The group, including John Howard Lawson, Edward Dahlberg, Alfred Hayes, Horace Gregory, Stephen Foster, Wallace Phelps, Isidor Schneider, Sender Garlin, Kenneth Fearing, Philip Rahv and Edwin Rolfe, is arranging a benefit for Bodenheim, to be held Wednesday evening, June 26, from 9 to 1, at the Pierre Degeyter Club, 165 West 23rd Street, New York. There will be a concert by the Pierre Degeyter string quartette, dancing, poetry readings by leading proletarian poets and refreshments. Bodenheim is the author of twenty-one novels and books of poetry, many of them at one time best sellers and some of them still actively moving on publishers' lists; nevertheless, the situation of the writer in capitalist society is so precarious that Bodenheim is now entirely without funds. The sponsoring group of writers extends an invitation for all who are interested in revolutionary literature to attend the benefit at the Pierre Degeyter Club.

The newly-formed League of Women Shoppers (Room 914, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York) has adopted as its platform: "A fair deal to Labor." The League investigates strike situations; unfair employers are boycotted, publicity is released and members of the League go on the picket lines and fight with the workers. At present the League is supporting the Ansonia Bootery strike.

A new magazine is announced, The Americas, which will deal with events in the countries of the Caribbean and South America. The Americas will have a brother Spanish organ, Sin Fronteras. Angel Flores, the editor, writes us:

"With offices in every Caribbean and South American country, The Americas is gathering around it the leading writers and artists of these countries. It will carry expert reportage, stories told by hitherto unheard voices, drawings and cartoons, the folk lore of the Indians. The Americas and Sin Fronteras will be the voice of the oppressed nations of the western hemisphere. They will stand for their right of self-determination. These magazines will stretch out their hands to bring together the masses in the United States who do not conform with the policies of our imperialist forces and in fact battle them here for our own rights and the masses of the Carribbean and South America, welding them together in the common struggle against reaction—imperialism, war and fascism."

Rose Baron of the Prisoners Relief Department of the I.L.D., writes that June 15 marked the opening of a drive to raise a Summer Milk Fund for the children of political prisoners. There are today 250 children whose fathers—victims of ruling class justice—are serving sentences from one year to life in the jails and penitentiaries of the United States. These children are practically the wards of the Prisoners Relief Department of the I.L.D. Relief agencies slam their doors in the faces of their mothers. In school they are often branded as little jail birds because their fathers dared to fight for a decent life for them.

"These children will not be able to go away to camps for the summer. They will not even have excursions to the parks and beaches that other workers' children have. They will have to go without one of the vital necessities of healthful childhood—unless those for whom their fathers gave their freedom, the American working class, will come to their aid.

"Two hundred and fifty children ranging in age from two to sixteen, look to you for help. Won't you help us reach your thousands of readers with their appeal? All contributions—no matter how small—will be welcomed by the Prisoners Relief Department, 80 East 11th Street, New York."

The Office Workers Union has organized a speakers bureau and is able to supply speakers equipped to talk on any subject of interest to white-collar workers. Groups, sections or office units are advised to get in touch with union headquarters, 504 Sixth Avenue, New York.

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Death of Yosl Cutler

NATHANIEL BUCHWALD

THE many thousands of his readers, comrades, admirers, friends had no other name for him than the chummy, affectionate *Yosl*. His colleagues loved him, children delighted in reciting his ditties, critics marveled at the disarming naivete and the rare felicity of his style, readers of The Jewish Morning Freiheit delighted in his humoresques and droll cartoons, theatre audiences clamored for encores when he presented his inimitable puppets. But a merchant from Omaha tried to hog the road, and Yosl Cutler is dead.

As a humorist and poet Yosl Cutler was unique among the Jewish writers. He wrote in a vein of charming unselfconsciousness and "primitivism," made dazzlingly luminous by his shrewd satire, his fresh buoyant wit and his matchless use of the homely Yiddish idiom cunningly combined with the jargon of the East Side. With it all went a complete unity of the writer with his work. To those who knew Yosl, his spoofing verse, his beautifully simple ballads, his racy and grotesque puppets and his prankish cartoons were simply attributes of that ever gay, ever joshing and care-free boy who in his early manhood lost none of the impishness of an East Side gamin. The one volume of his stories and poems published in 1934 holds but an infinitessimal portion of that joyous and all-pervading something which was Yosl Cutler.

The son of a butcher, Yosl Cutler was born in the Ukraine in 1896, and at the age of fifteen came to New York in quest of those legendary fortunes and adventures of which he heard so much in his native Troyanov. He turned to account his love for "painting figures" and became a sign painter. Exploited by his employers and cheated by his clients, Yosl soon learned the real meaning of *Amerikaner Glik'n* and tried to laugh it off. He

managed to receive some odd schooling in art and intended to become a painter. A chance meeting with Moishe Nadir turned Yosl into a writer. Before Cutler had published a single piece and while he was still puzzled by the mysteries of spelling, Nadir pronounced Yosl Cutler the most gifted and original of the young generation of writers.

His literary career (if the word can at all be applied to Yosl Cutler) began in The Morning Freiheit some thirteen years ago. At first he was merely spoofing. With childish delight he invented topsy-turvey worlds, peopled Heaven with the most absurd and grotesque beings and turned the traditional religious lore into droll and very irreverent nonsense. Though politically undeveloped at the time, he brought with him to the revolutionary movement an unfailing instinct for the good and wholesome things in life and a thorough contempt for the rich, the exploiters, the philistines. As he gained knowledge and experience in the revolutionary movement with which he was identified in many ways, Yosl began imparting more and more meaning and

Drawings by Yosl Cutler

revolutionary purpose to his spoofing. He began drawing upon his environment for material, forsaking entirely the never-never land of his imagination. Rent strikes, evictions, unemployment and class struggle generally became his themes. But Yosl did not turn "dry" when he turned Communist. On the contrary, he found a new purpose for his fooling and began writing in prose and verse amazingly clever political satire, retaining at the same time all the sunny cheer and infectious impishness of his earlier writings. He became so completely at one with the revolutionary movement that when it was suggested to him, in 1934, to join the Communist Party, Yosl replied: "And I thought I've been in the Party all this time!"

As a puppeteer Yosl Cutler quickly gained a unique position both because of his unusual puppets and the rare quality of his material.

At his funeral, over fifteen thousand workers marched. And yet the news of Yosl Cutler's death is somehow hard to believe. Yosl and death are mutually exclusive. And despite the great shock at the terrible news, one has the feeling that Yosl Cutler will live on forever.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Rise of the Nazis

MR. HEIDEN'S book[1] was most favorably received by the liberal press, hailed as "the most valuable document we so far have on German fascism," the first comprehensive account by an anti-fascist of the rise and triumph of fascism in Germany. The American edition combines two of Heiden's German works, one of them (*The History of National Socialism,* 1932) published before, the other (*The Birth of the Third Reich,* 1934) after Hitler's accession to power. A concluding chapter brings the story up to the fall of 1934.

The jacket informs us that Heiden was the leader of the republican students in Munich; that as far back as 1920 he took an active part in combatting the growing influence of the Nazis in the German universities, and that up to 1930 he was a correspondent for the Frankfurter Zeitung, a leading organ of the German commercial capitalists (since then bought up by the I. G. Farbenindustrie—or dye-trust—and coordinated like the rest of the legal press). Even without this data regarding the author's political past, we should have had no doubts as to his attitude toward fascism. For 428 pages Heiden pleads the cause of the defunct German democracy, displaying all the qualities of the liberal historian. He has amassed a wealth of historical data, but his conclusions are in patent contradiction to this material. Guided by a philosophy which hovers in abstractions high above his facts, he is unable to interpret them. He prefers to lose himself in romantic mysticism rather than to recognize the urgent lessons of history.

One reviewer of Heiden's book who could not help giving his personal ignorance the form of an attack on Marxism complained that Marxists had added little to the theoretical understanding of National-Socialism. Nearly seven years ago, when liberals were celebrating the dawn of the Golden Age, the World Congress of the Third International adopted a program which expressed the characteristics of fascism and the social prerequisites for its growth:

"Under certain special historical conditions," it states, "the progress of the bourgeois, imperialist, reactionary offensive assumes the form of fascism. These conditions are: instability of capitalist relationship; the existence of considerable declassed social elements, the pauperization of broad strata of the urban petit-bourgeoisie and of the intelligentsia; discontent among the rural petit-bourgeoisie, and finally, the constant menace of mass proletarian action. In order to stabilize and perpetuate its rule the bourgeoisie is compelled to an increasing degree to abandon the parliamentary system in favor of the fascist system, which is independent of interparty arrangements and combinations.

"The fascist system is a system of direct dictatorship, ideologically masked by the 'national idea' and representation of the 'professions' (in reality representation of the various groups of the ruling class). It is a system that resorts to a peculiar form of social demagogy (anti-Semitism, occasional sorties against usurer's capital and gestures of impatience with the parliamentary 'talking shop') in order to utilize the discontent of the petit-bourgeoisie, the intellectual and other strata of society; and to corruption through the building up of a compact and well-paid hierarchy of fascist units, a party apparatus and a bureaucracy. At the same time fascism strives to permeate the working class by recruiting the most backward strata of the workers to its ranks, by playing upon their discontent, by taking advantage of the inaction of Social-Democracy, etc.

"The principal aim of fascism is to destroy the revolutionary labor vanguard, *i.e.,* the Communist sections and leading units of the proletariat. The combination of social demagogy, corruption and active aggression in the sphere of foreign politics, are characteristic features of fascism. In periods of acute crisis for the bourgeoisie, fascism resorts to anti-capitalist phraseology, but, after it has established itself at the helm of the state, it casts aside its anti-capitalist rattle, and discloses itself as a terrorist dictatorship of big capital."

The Communists made this analysis in 1928. Since then many liberals have become convinced of its correctness.

It is most essential for the success of any fascist movement that its true motives and aims should remain concealed. Monopoly capital—as it pulls the strings—must in no case become visible. Since fascism strives to win over classes and strata toward whose actual interests it is directed, social demagogy is a necessary ingredient in its agitation and propaganda. National Socialism has developed this demagogy to its highest point. While Hitler campaigned against the "Jewish-Marxist incitement of the people" and saw his only master in "the nation" whose division into classes he refused to acknowledge, he none the less promised each of the exploited classes the satisfaction of its special demands: he promised the peasant higher prices for his produce, the industrial worker cheaper food, the artisan freedom from taxation and protection against big business.

To reveal the class content of fascism behind the smoke-screen of its radical phrases, to discredit it in the eyes of the masses—and particularly of the petit-bourgeoisie, its easiest victims—as the tool of monopoly capital, is the chief task in the ideological struggle against fascism. A history of National-Socialism serving this purpose would be a valuable contribution toward an anti-fascist united front.

It is just in this essential point that Heiden falls down: he leaves the reader in doubt as to the real nature of National-Socialism. The material, which is in part excellent, does not help toward an understanding of the problem but only tends to confuse us. After a careful reading of the book, it is impossible to say with certainty whether Heiden regards fascism as an independent movement of the radicalized petit-bourgeoisie (many points would indicate this: industry is forced to "submit" to Hitler; Darre, the minister of agriculture, subjects even the Junkers to his dictatorial rule, etc.) or whether he recognizes the N.S.D.A.P. to be a party led by the most reactionary representatives of monopoly capital—a party whose membership is recruited mostly among those members of the petit-bourgeoisie which have been uprooted by the crisis, but whose *leadership* remains in the hands of the ruling class, and whose historical task is the destruction of all organized resistance to capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression.

However, Heiden gives us all the data we need to determine the class character of National-Socialism from its very beginning. We read that the defeat of the Munich Soviet in 1919 gave the "German Workers' Party" its first opportunity for large scale political activity and enabled it to attract the attention of the Reichswehr; Heiden informs us that after the Reichswehr and the fascist bands had captured Munich, Hitler "joined the staff of the commission that had been established to investigate the events of the Bolshevist revolution in Munich and draw up indictments against persons suspected of complicity in the revolution"; that "an anti-Semitic debate at which Hitler spoke caused his (army-) commander to regard him as suitable to be an 'education officer' in a Munich regiment"; that the Reichswehr then sent him as its agent into the "German Workers' Party," which later developed into the N.S.D.A.P.; he further tells us that from the beginning Hitler's party enjoyed the favor of the Bavarian reactionaries and the police; that in 1920 the Voelkischer Beobachter was purchased with money emanating from Reichswehr sources, whereupon it passed into Hitler's possession; that Hitler

[1] *Konrad Heiden: A History of National-Socialism.* Alfred A. Knopf. 428 pages. $4.50.

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immediately took up the fight against the radical petit-bourgeoisie elements in the party and forced them out of the leadership. We learn that during the inflation years the Nazis were financed with American dollars and Swiss francs (in 1923 "Putzy" Hanfstaengl made Hitler a dollar loan and received as security a mortgage on The Voelkischer Beobachter, which could then be expanded into a daily). From the very beginning of his political career Hitler established contacts with high capitalistic circles; he was a friend in the house of Herr von Borsig, one of the biggest German heavy industrialists, and as early as 1923 he was invited by the Association of Bavarian Industrialists to acquaint them with his program. Money flowed into his hands from all sides, and nothing could make him so furious as to be asked where it came from. This was a question he never answered.

The ideology developed by the new party was exactly suited to its material foundations. Through Hitler the word "socialism"—which the "Marxist-contaminated" masses associated with a new social order without war and exploitation—received a new content:

"Whoever has understood our great national anthem: 'Deutschland, Deutschland ueber alles' to mean that nothing in the wide world surpasses in his eyes this Germany, people and land, land and people—that man is a socialist."

By way of justifying private industry, he did not scorn the oldest chestnuts from the liberalistic theory of competition:

"Our great industrialists," he says, "are not concerned with the acquisition of wealth or with good living, but, above all else, with responsibility and power. They have worked their way to the top by their own ability, and this proof of their capacity—a capacity only displayed by a higher race—gives them the right to lead."

The true function of the racial theory could not have been more clumsily exposed.

One of the chief elements in the "heroic weltanschauung" of National-Socialism is its hatred of the class-conscious workers. The independent workers' organizations are for Hitler "a mass of working animals lacking leadership." In his discussion with Otto Strasser shortly before their break in 1930, (Strasser was the son of a small Austrian government employe), he gives free rein to his aristocratic aspiration:

"The great masses of the workmen," he said, "want nothing else than bread and amusement; they have no understanding of idealism; and we can never count upon being able to gain any considerable support among them. What we want is a picked number from the new ruling class who are not troubled with humanitarian feelings, but are convinced that they have the right to rule as being a superior race, and who will secure and maintain their rule ruthlessly over the broad masses."

Of course the demagogy of National-Socialism became apparent long before Hitler's rise to power, whenever Hitler was forced to take a *concrete* stand on any question of class. In October, 1930, the Nazis proposed a bill involving state ownership of all the big banks. When the Communists and Socialists took them at their word and threatened to vote for the measure, "Hitler's financial backers intervened, and it was quietly withdrawn." When the Hitlerites, for fear of being too far compromised in the workers' eyes as an agency for strikebreakers, were forced to permit their members to take part in industrial disputes, the leaders ran to their capitalist friends with comforting explanations. But anyone who may have been prevented by the Nazis' radical gestures from seeing that the Nazis were bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of the ruling class, still had an unfailing test at his disposal: this test was the attitude of bourgeois justice toward the innumerable crimes committed by the Hitler party under the Weimar constitution.

For Hitler's attempt at forcible seizure of the government (Beerhall Putsch, November 9, 1923), the Republic sentenced him to nine months' imprisonment. (The Communist, Eugen Leviné was sentenced to death and executed for his participation in the Munich Soviet.) Hitler's imprisonment consisted of receiving delegations, holding conferences with his party friends, issuing proclamations and working on his book. Between 1930 and 1932 the favor shown by the courts to National Socialist murder and violence became so scandalous that even conservative circles spoke of a "crisis of justice." When Communists and Nazis clashed, the Nazis were always the innocent victims who only killed in self-defense. An officer of the German general staff writes the following denunciation of the bourgeois legal machine in his "Berlin Diaries."

"August 9, 1932:

"The terrorist acts of the Brown Shirts are assuming alarming proportions. As a consequence the Government (Papen) has today issued an extremely severe emergency decree, appointed special courts, and threatened the death penalty. But naturally the Ministers have not had to courage to say quite openly that the brutalities of the Nazis have forced them into these measures: they behave instead as if the wicked Communists were responsible for them. I am eager to see what will be the outcome. I scarcely imagine that the Hitlerites will be very greatly intimidated by this step. For even should one of these rascals be sentenced to death, he's sure to be pardoned again. They know that."

Financed by big capital, favored by bourgeois justice, trained by active and inactive Reichswehr officers—this is the party that Heiden repeatedly calls "revolutionary." The author bemoans the weakness of the Weimar state, its pusillanimity and cowardice which prevent it from using all the forcible measures at its disposal against these "revolutionaries." In a "normal" state, says Heiden, Hitler would simply have been locked up, particularly as he was a foreigner. We don't know what a "normal" state is. But this naivete betrays Heiden's inability to see that the class relations at the base of the Weimar Republic had been destroyed by the crisis and could not be restored. "If there had been a government at that time," he writes, "which understood how to talk to the people, which had announced a constructive program of recovery, which had used metaphors and promises only half as cleverly as National Socialism did later when it came to power—such a government would probably have overthrown Hitler for all time." Thus he appraises the political situation in 1932.

Unfortunately he fails to tell us what recovery program could have been employed by the bourgeois government, which would not have been at the expense of the masses. And no capitalist government can maintain itself exclusively by the art of "speaking to the people." From time to time it must practise the art of shooting down the people.

Unable to see the class struggles of the Weimar Republic as the cause of its political "degeneration," Heiden on one page calls Bruening's governmental art "a remarkable political achievement." "It is a most positive result for the Chancellor to have held off anarchy for two years." While on the next page we read: "In the great attack on the working class, Bruening was in point of fact on the side of the employers. . . . The cleverness of Bruening's policy lay in his assuring himself of the support of the Socialists even for the most unpopular measures by hinting at a dictatorship of the Right. Thus the Chancellor and the largest political party steadily became more and more unpopular."

To be sure Heiden calls the period from 1919 to 1932 a "dying epoch" and speaks of the "intrinsic defects" of the Weimar Republic, but he succeeds in dodging the essential question, whose answer would alone explain the transformation of bourgeois democracy into fascism. Was any other way except fascism open to the German bourgeoisie to hold down the rising proletarian revolution?

This central problem does not exist for Heiden's history of National-Socialism. There was no threat of social revolution, he says. The Communists were only the bogey which caused the bourgeois parties of the center "to keep the Socialists in power for years as a bulwark against Bolshevism." The Communists, enslaved by Moscow and disorganized through the activities of spies in their ranks, were in no condition to take a leading role in German developments. In speaking of the Communists, our objective scientist does not hesitate utterly to falsify history.

"Until well on in the year 1932," he writes, "German Communists were obeying

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the strange order (of Moscow) that Hitler's seizure of power must be actually encouraged, because the path of Communism must go by way of the rule of fascism and its collapse."

This written by a man who must know that the Communist Party struggled with all its might against the defeatism of the Social-Democrats who spoke of handing the government over to Hitler in order that he might "do away with himself." The warrior of The Frankfurter Zeitung abounds in witticisms to the effect that "the manufacturers in Moscow" were not interested in a German revolution, which would have spoiled their market. And he takes delight in explaining the nature of fascism by examples of the proletarian dictatorship in order to emphasize the similarity of the two systems.

After we have sought in vain a satisfactory explanation of why the Social-Democratic Mueller government, then Bruening, then Papen and then Schleicher failed to rescue the Weimar Republic, we at length discover in one short paragraph of the compendious work the true cause of the Republic's fall. And this time Heiden even regales us with a "class analysis." The Weimar Republic came to an end because it was based on a class which was itself disintegrating. Its basis was the working class "which had been educated to state-consciousness," but, he goes on, "a new class-conciousness from various directions permeated it and broke it up."

Heiden's first political discovery is that the Weimar Republic was based on the working class. That the working class falls apart when permeated by a new class-consciousness is the second. And the third is that the working class in its fall back from "state-consciousness" to class-consciousness destroys its own state.

Those who fail to understand the class struggle as the result of social forces, must inevitably regard history as the playground of great men. Heiden makes up for his inability to render an analysis of the class relations which forced (and enabled) the bourgeoisie to pass from the democratic to the fascist form of domination, by his masterly handling of the historical dime novel. As if under the spell of the latest thriller, we learn how ministers caught each other in carefully-laid traps; we are initiated into the intrigues spun by the camarilla around Hindenburg; we read how noble men and friends were betrayed. Schleicher, the chancellor-maker, presses the political dagger into the back of Groener, the honest Reichswehr Minister; Bruening, next to Stresemann the greatest statesman of the Republic (says Heiden) comes off no better, although he had declared his readiness to do everything, absolutely everything, the bourgeoisie demanded of him. Then Franz von Papen is brought into the arena by Schleicher, only to be annihilated by the same Schleicher is overtaken by his fate. Hitler would never have come to power if he had not (how many times?) broken his word of honor to which the German-national Nibelungens around Hindenburg trusted so blindly. And how differently would Germany's future have been decided, if heavy industry had not made the aged field marshal a present of an estate in East Prussia, thereby insinuating the feudal-capitalist temptation into his democratic heart.

We do not reproach Heiden for laying the emphasis of his story on the specifically *German* conditions and the historical accidents which accompanied the victory of fascism in Germany. But seeing only accidents, personal weakness and so on, he fails in explaining or even mentioning the *universal* causes for the development of fascism in all capitalist countries. The American reader may conclude that National-Socialism is a typically German and therefore unique phenomenon. For where in the world can we find another such constellation of Hindenburgs, Hitlers, Bruenings, Schleichers, Brauns and Severings? But what we must really learn of a history of National-Socialism are some *universal* truths: National-Socialism grew out of the peculiarities of the class struggle in Germany. Similarly French, Japanese and American fascism are all developing their own characteristic traits. But the class character is always the same, that is: the terroristic dictatorship of big capital. Its aims are the bloody repression of the organized working class; the elimination of all freedom of thought and action for the masses, unrestrained exploitation of the workers and a new partition of the earth by force of arms.

The sufferings of the German workers would be in vain if their English, French and American class comrades had not learned from them that only a fighting united front of all the exploited classes can prevent the bourgeoisie from establishing fascist dictatorships everywhere and turning the world into a heap of ruins. This simple truth is gradually taking possession of the masses despite the pseudo-scientific historians of the Weimar Republic, who have forgotten nothing and learned nothing. KARL BILLINGER.

E. (i. o. u.) Noncummings

NO THANKS, by E. E. Cummings. Golden Eagle Press. $2.

THE title, *No Thanks,* is followed by a page inscribed to fourteen commercial publishers. These, I have heard, were offered the manuscript and rejected it, probably because they could see no prospects of a sale in it; though they could have given better reasons. Thus, in a derisive title, like a condemned man ironically assisting his executioner, one of the most distinguished poets of capitalist America records its failure to him. No arraignment, no interpolations, only an aristocratic and wasted scorn which could have served Veblen for an example; and a withdrawal, as the contents of the volume disclose, into an independence so removed and so unliving that it is, in effect, a literary act of suicide. E. E. Cummings, by the testimony of this volume, may be put alongside of Hart Crane among the casualties of disintegrating capitalism.

This suicide which Mr. Cummings propagandizes as salvation, this death which through a bewildering smoke wreath of nons he calls life, has a principle, a dialectic in fact, insulted though Mr. Cummings may be by the term. Briefly, it is that among the living there is a further category of life, which might be defined as vivid and independent awareness, especially of the physical world. Those having it are the "live" and those lacking it are the "dead." It is surprising that so sophisticated a gent as Mr. Cummings should be so solemn about it. The philosophy, such as it is, is passé even in Greenwich Village where it throve, years ago, in hazes of gin and bobbed-hair mysticism. Over the teacups then, one could hear a girl frightening a man with "I like you because you are alive!" and gossip disposing of its victim always as one of the "dead."

Mr. Cummings must know that these verbal funerals have long gone out of fashion. Nevertheless, he persists in his role of spiritual undertaker, although his functions are without effect except upon himself. Unlife and no-men are laid out in this poetry as they packed the morgue-vaults of his Hearstian Russian Diary. The most solid of these poems, often written with great cleverness, are put to this task. A few of the (wished) deceased are characters out of the capitalist society that has proved so lethal to Mr. Cummings. The majority, however, are revolutionary writers and revolutionists in general. Mr. Cummings, inspecting their suppositious corpses, permits himself the barbarism of mutilation. Among other devices he recollects in his dirges their (presumed) adenoidal foreign speech, appealing to that most debased and most anti-cultural of herd furies, the hatred of the alien.

For what living thing are these "dead" laid low? We look for it in the remaining poems where Mr. Cummings practices the individualism which he cherishes and which he imagines a collective society will destroy. It proves to be (with the exception of one graceful love poem and occasional lines in which the ghost of E. E. Cummings successfully haunts Mr. E. E. Noncummings) something singularly and spectacularly dead. So dead, in fact, are these poems that the author can take autopsical liberties with them, eviscerating them, severing their limbs and rearranging the parts like a prankish medical student using the materials of a dissection room for building blocks.

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They make patterns of course, and some readers may find them amusing, though laborious. The O's of the moon poems may please these readers; the letter placed outside a poem for reference like an algebraic integer may please others; and the exclamation point and parenthesis devised to represent the male and female sex organs may pleasantly startle still others. But these orthographic tricks only emphasize the inanimateness of the objects used in the game. In addition to his death terms, Mr. Cummings dwells much on growth and increase and gleamings. One has the suspicion that he mistakes corpse bloating and the iridescence of corruption for what they so implacably are not.

The culture of capitalism is dying varied deaths. Where it does not disappear through sheer neglect, where it does not run for the last sacrament to the church like T. S. Eliot, where it does not starve itself to death before the urns of tradition like Allen Tate, it gyrates to death in the St. Vitus dance of hysterical individualism.

I have said before that Mr. Cummings has committed literary suicide. Rejecting the revolution, there is nothing left for him since it is clear, in his own poems, that he rejects also, realizing that it is dead, the capitalist society in which he, perforce, must try to live. Human society is in possession of the physical world. Mr. Cummings may attempt a super-possession of it by his special awareness, but it is an act of despair and is, in fact, a rushing out of life. The awareness of revolutionary artists is an act of confidence and it lives.

Characteristic of the "ideas" Mr. Cummings' poems contains, we may quote the following:

Kumrads die because they're told
Kumrads die before they're old
(Kumrads aren't afraid to die
Kumrads don't
and Kumrads won't
believe in life) and death knows whie.

(all good Kumrads you can tell
by their altruistic smell
Moscow pipes good Kumrads dance)
Kumrads enjoy
S. Freud knows whoy
the hope that you will mess your pance.

Every Kumrad is a bit
of quite unmitigated hate
(Travelling in a futile groove
god knows why)
and so do i
(because they are afraid to love

and this

IN)
all those who got
athlete's mouth jumping
on & off bandwaggons

(MEMORIAM

We find in these two poems the typical ignorance and malice of the anti-Communist. By implication the revolutionary artist (along with other revolutionists) is without a mind of his own, is an opportunist, a hater of the living and incapable of love. The answer to the first charge I don't believe Mr. Cummings could understand since, in common with other accusers, the tradition of dissent in capitalist society as the necessary reflex reaction of the artist is so ingrown in his mind that assent to another type of society seems incredible to him and voluntary devotion to it seems to be an unnatural act. The answer to the second charge Mr. Cummings can work out for himself by answering these mathematical problems: What, materially, does the left artist stand to gain? And how many left writers have deserted the radical position? The answers to the third and fourth are very simple. The hatred of revolutionists is for the dead, the visibly dead political economic system for which they are struggling to provide decent interment; and their love is for the living thing that is awaiting space to grow in. It is a love which the pathetic self-love of Mr. Cummings finds incomprehensible, but until he becomes capable of sharing it he will know little of life and love.

Finally, and it is not necessary to consult S. Freud to "know whoy," revolutionary writers—I can speak for them—have not enjoyed seeing, in this volume, Mr. Cummings "mess his pance."

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

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A Very Sad Young Man

HUNGRY MEN, by Edward Anderson. Doubleday, Doran & Co. $2.

THE name of this book is *Hungry Men.* The author says his name is Edward Anderson. If it had been Sherwood, the book would have sold better, but it would have been just as bad. There are 275 pages in this book and the blurb says that Edward has actually been on the bum himself. This is to assure you that *Hungry Men* is an authentic document. It is a very sad blurb, for it tells about all the misery that poor Edward has been through to get the material for this book, and at first you will be sad too, but after a while you will not be sad. For at the end Edward says,

> but the American isn't going to turn Socialist or Communist, at least not in this generation. I wanted to write something to explain it. America is rich. There is plenty and nobody is actually going to die of hunger. In *Hungry Men* I have tried to show what I mean.

You will see no Jesus Christ looks in the eyes of Edward Anderson's *Hungry Men,* no soup-lines that stretch for a block and never start moving, no derelicts dying of malnutrition on top of lice-filled three-decker bunks while the mission sign outside flashes "Jesus Saves" on and off in the dark. In a word, you find no *Hungry Men.* When one of Mr. Anderson's puppets gets a gnawing in the pit of his guts, he takes him up to a back door or a restaurant and feeds him. When his hero is mooning on the waterfront over a respectable two-bit whore that he is in love with, you will never guess what happens—the Communist in the book hands him fifty bucks and says here take this dough, I'll not be needing it and make a home for the gal.

In "the land of plenty where nobody starves," Mr. Anderson would get thrown off a freight train if he pulled some of these yarns on the two or three hundred stiffs that ride the tops.

> There is a survival of the fittest law. The strong are always going to have more than the weak. I'm sittin' in this dump here and the reason for it is because I'm not strong enough to be sittin' in Childs. However, I'll be eatin' in Childs before it ends.

There was a time when you could have stopped a revolution of stiffs with a sack of doughnuts, but that time is not now. The American unemployed working stiff who starves in the day and freezes on freights in the night, and has not had a suit of clothes for five years, knows that America is rich. He knows there is plenty for all, and despite Mr. Anderson's Epworth League optimism, he knows that men do starve to death when day after day they fill their guts with carrot slop and grits. Perhaps Mr.

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Anderson has never seen a bunch of desperately hungry men. Perhaps Mr. Anderson has never seen a hungry man.

We are not told how long the author of *Hungry Men* was on the fritz. We are told that with only two bucks in his kick poor Edward left his family and a little country print shop and started out to see America. We hope he is safe back home, for Edward should not be traipsing around the country. Only once do you think that maybe he is too smart to sleep on the track. That is when he says,

> He starts wanting to know why this man has a chauffered Packard, and he can't get his three dollar shoes half-soled.

But hush. Be quiet. Edward is only joshing when he says this. In the final chapter the hero, through sheer rugged individualism, makes himself the head of a three-piece street band. They are sauntering down the street ready and willing to toot their horns for an honest penny, when they are invited to play the "Internationale." Acel bloodies the nose of the one-eyed drunk who suggests it, lands in court and instead of being thrown into the hoosegow as we are hoping to death he will be, he is complimented by the judge for refusing to have any truck "with this hymn, or song, or whatever it is of a corrupt foreign government." An alert police reporter sends a rush call for a photographer, promises wide publicity for Acel's band which on the spot renames itself "The Three Americans" and hires them to play patriotic songs like "Over There."

So we leave our hero muttering to himself, "I got some idea, by God." Acel and his "Three Americans" will go on tooting "Over There," a living beacon for impoverished musicians who have a grudge against the "Internationale" and a yen to eat at Childs.

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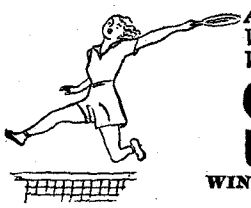

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The Theatre

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DURING the week of June 10, at the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre of the University of Michigan, the Dramatic Festival Company under the direction of Robert Henderson, presented for the first time anywhere *The Ugly Runts,* a new play announced to be a great contribution to American proletarian drama. It was written by Robert Raynolds, young author of *Brothers in the West* which won the Harper $10,000 novel prize.

The Ugly Runts is based on the historic tragedy that shook the world last October when 1,200 coal miners in Pecs, Hungary, sickened by their conditions but hoping to call the whole world's attention to their plight, went down to their mines to starve rather than submit to continued wage cuts and further misery. By their action and by the intensity of their courage they cracked the heart of the whole world wide open.

Raynolds has set out to accomplish a vast objective: to deal with proletarian subject matter in a full-length blank verse play. *The Ugly Runts* demonstrates the author's literary versatility: he is a novelist, a dramatist and a poet, but unfortunately for the leftward movement in the theatre, the play is as far from being a proletarian play as *Henry IV, Part I* or Galsworthy's *Strife.*

The story centers about the leader of the miners, Steipan Kamas (played by Tom Powers of *Sailors of Catarro* fame) and Frieda, his three-months' bride. The workers are desperate and determined to carry out their plans. The men go down. Act two: the owner of the mine appears at the entrance to the mine and deplores the action of his workers. In this he is supported by representatives from the church and the government labor department. Frieda rails at the owner in true Grecian style. He explains to her that she really shouldn't envy him or his palaces or his yachts. His lot is a hard one. His brain is overworked. He is really losing money and is merely keeping the mine open to give work to his men. Frieda immediately sighs, "Ah, you have a voice of human tone. Then the world's wrong. If my heart were large enough, it should ache and pain for you as it does for the piteous workers below." Once again in all seriousness. "Come, let us go down to the mine and reason with them and try to persuade the men to give up their folly." A marvelous transformation in Frieda. Unaccounted for by the author.

Act three. The pit of the mine. Four days of hunger have weakened the determination of the men. All want to give in. Only Kamas is firm—and he can well afford to be, for he controls a switch that would blow the entrance to the mine to pieces should they make any move to surrender. (Shades of *Black Fury!*) Poor Frieda, torn between her love for Kamas and her allegiance to the principle of compromise can stand it no longer. Lifting a gun shoved into her hand by a traitorous worker, she shoots Kamas. He dies and she laments. The workers go up following the Boss, the Bishop and the Government Labor Representative.

The author has attempted a momentous work by combining this stuff with poetry. Perhaps some day, an American poet will arise who will use the poetic-dramatic medium to express the aspirations of the proletariat. And although it is impossible to describe it in advance, one will not fail to recognize such a work when it appears. It is not recognizable in *The Ugly Runts.* Raynolds has made a valiant attempt, but the cards were stacked against him from the beginning, first by his real unfamiliarity with worker psychology and ideological aspirations, and secondly by the effort to be painfully impartial—which has resulted in his being quite obviously partial to the capitalist condolence of the incurable chaos of a universe subject only to divine will.

Framed in realistic settings designed by Stewart Chaney, embellished by beautiful choreography directed and composed by Felecia Sorel and Demetrios Vilan, the characters in the drama have every opportunity to come to life. They never do. They are wooden symbols with an occasional burst of human spirit. Raynolds has not plunged deep enough into the characters he has created to reveal the underlying significance of their roles in the universe. There is almost a total lack of depth or shading in the characters, all being sincere, noble, honest, true, courageous—and lost. They are for the most part flat allegorical symbols and the fine cast of actors was unable to breathe the life into them.

The Ugly Runts was performed before an audience composed of bridge-playing wives, who gave it a tremendous ovation. George Jean Nathan has called Robert Raynolds "the American Sean O'Casey." If he implies by this compliment that Raynolds has all the confusion of O'Casey, then I suppose the comparison is justified. J. C. SEIDEL.

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Between Ourselves

Next week's issue of THE NEW MASSES will be the sixth quarterly. As we announced last week in this column, one of the main features of the quarterly will be a group of short stories selected by a special committee. Among the stories are: "Rabbit," by Ben Field; "Lumpen," by Nelson Algren; "A Visit to Uncle Joe's," by Saul Levitt, "Guns," by Peter Quince; "Strong Hands," by Len Zinberg, and "Case History," the work of an unknown writer by the name of John Mortimer. The stories will be introduced with an essay by Alan Calmer.

THE NEW MASSES is glad to announce the addition to its staff of Loren Miller, well-known Negro columnist and editor. Miller has just come to New York from the West Coast where he was the correspondent for the Associated Negro Press. He had previously served that news agency in the Soviet Union and in Germany. His column on "Second Thought" in The California Eagle, was well-known for its vigorous championing of the oppressed Negro people. With Ben Davis, Jr., he edits the Crusader News Agency. He was formerly news editor on The California Eagle, The California News, and Los Angeles Sentinel. He has been a frequent contributor to Opportunity and Crisis and is now working on a history of Negro thought in this country.

Eugene Gordon has resigned from the editorial staff of THE NEW MASSES, since he is now in the Soviet Union.

Joshua Kunitz, who is to be Moscow correspondent of THE NEW MASSES, leaves July 5 on the French liner Champlain in charge of a travel group for the Open Road. Several places in the group are still open, and applications may be made to the Open Road, Inc., 56 West 45th Street, New York.

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